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WASHTENAW
JEWISH NEWS

December 2009/January 2010 Kislev/Tevet/Shevat 5770 Volume XXXIV: Number 5 FREE

False witnesses

Art Aisner, special to the WJN

It was a cloudless and picturesque morning in Ann Arbor, when the sunlight peeked through the rustling leaves overhead and danced across rhythmic shadows along the pavement and grass lining Washtenaw Avenue.

Between the sounds of squirrels scurrying across the fallen leaves and the occasional hum of the passing vehicle, resonated the clickety-clack of heels hitting concrete.

A crowd of finely dressed people—many carrying *talit* bags and some with baby strollers in tow—hurriedly moved toward the crosswalks lining Beth Israel Congregation with purpose as this Sabbath was also Rosh Hashanah. Some congregants were in deep discussion about the significance of the Jewish New Year, while others talked of lighter issues, like celebrity names and schoolmate's text messages.

In front of them, across the four lanes of Ann Arbor's most heavily traveled roadways, wait four protesters with audacious signs aimed for their eyes. One decries Israeli statehood, another puts down America's support for it, and still another demonizes the Zionist belief that a Jewish national home belongs on territory where Jews have lived for thousands of years, whether in or out of power.

Henry Herskovitz

Sol Metz

Marcia Federbush

Gloria Harb

For nearly seven years, the congregation of Ann Arbor's most visible synagogue has been subjected to the display of signs and the people who hold them.

Originally calling themselves "Jewish Witnesses for Peace," the group has held "vigil," as they call it, outside regardless of the weather, on every Saturday, on every bar and bat mitzvah, every holiday held on Shabbat. When their call for reinforcements—publicized on ElectronicIntifada.org—brought few Jews, the group eventually acknowledged demographic reality by adding to their name "and Friends."

On this day, among the holiest on the Hebrew calendar, those in the crowd do their best to ignore the demonstrators and try not to give credence to the signs calling for Israel's "control" over Congress to end and that Zionism destroys Judaism.

And though the congregants avoid eye contact, they see them, without question. Some, even when parking is at a premium like on the High Holidays, park in the neighborhoods behind the synagogue and walk along the side of the building in order to completely avoid the demonstrators.

A crowd of synagogue officials greet congregants at the door to check their tickets for seating, and to make sure the demonstrators are

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Jewish Family Services to honor Judie and Jerry Lax on January 24

Staci Kennedy, special to the WJN

Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County will honor Judie and Jerry Lax with the Claire and Isadore Bernstein Leadership Award on Sunday, January 24, 2010. The event will take place at 3 p.m. in the Morris Lawrence Building at Washtenaw Community College.

This award is given each year to members of the Ann Arbor area who have demonstrated outstanding community service. Past recipients include Ambassador Ronald N. Weiser and Albert M. Berriz (McKinley Associates), Kenneth Fischer; Phyllis and David Herzig,;and Rachel Bendit and Mark Bernstein. The past recipients have graciously agreed to serve as the honorary chairs for this event.

The theme of this year's event, "Delightful, Delicious, De-Laxes," will set the tone for an afternoon of desserts, good cheer, and wonderful tributes to a couple that has done so much to help and enhance the Ann Arbor community.

Detroit natives Judie and Jerry met in May of 1968 and married three months later at Adat Shalom Synagogue in Detroit. Judie earned both a BA in education and an MA in special education from the University of Michigan. She enjoyed a distinguished career in education and in development while also devoting much of her life to volunteer work of all kinds. With her father and several friends serving as role models, Judie has spent her years in Ann Arbor dedicating herself to many worthy causes, including Arbor Hospice, the Ann Arbor Public Schools, Center for the Education of Women (where she was both on staff and later a member of their board), Performance Network and the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor.

Judie and Jerry Lax

Jerry also attended the U-M, graduating with a B.A. in philosophy and then moving on to Harvard Law School where he earned his Juris Doctorate. Jerry has established himself as

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Community invited to JCC Chanukah celebration

Margi Brawer, special to the WJN

The Latke Hop, a family Chanukah celebration, will take place at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor on Saturday, December 5, from 6–9 p.m. Highlighting this year's event will be surprise entertainment with nationally known mystery musicians. There will be games and crafts; havdalah; dinner and live music; dancing; and candlelighting.

Tickets for members are $12 for adults and $5 for children ages two and older. Nonmember tickets are $14 for adults and $6 for children. For reservations, call the JCC at 971-0990 or visit the JCC website at jccannarbor.org.

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Save the date: bike trip in Israel, November 4–14, 2010

Eileen Freed, special to the WJN

The Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Ann Arbor has announced the Ann Arbor Community Bike Trip in Israel to take place November 4-14, 2010. A committee, chaired by Hillary Murt, is working with trip coordinators Rabbi Bob Levy and Eileen Freed to develop an exciting itinerary focused on northern Israel, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

"Cycling trips have become my preferred type of vacation," said Murt. "This trip will combine my love of cycling with my interest in seeing parts of Israel not usually encountered on a normal tour of the country." There has been significant participation in organized cycling vacations among many in the community. This trip is designed to offer a similar combination of great cycling, interesting sites, and delicious food. An added bonus will be a stay in Ann Arbor's Partnership 2000 community, Moshav Nahalal, and the participation of members of Nahalal in some portions of the ride.

The trip provider, Ecobike Cycling Vacations, specializes in bike tours in Israel and the Mediterranean. Its co-founder, Amir Rockman, has cycled across North and Central America and has guided tours in Israel, Turkey, and the United States. During the past two summers, Rockman and Rabbi Levy co-led the Olin-Sanger-Ruby Union Institute's "Wheels Around the Lake" program, a four-week teen bike trip around Lake Michigan. "Amir is an outstanding guide and really knows his bikes," said Rabbi Levy. "His expertise and dedication will ensure our group has an exceptional experience."

An introductory meeting about the trip will be held Sunday, January 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the JCC. For more information, contact Eileen Freed at eileenfreed@jewishannarbor.org or 677-0100.

Chaverim B'Shirim to perform at JCC on December 13

Margi Brawer, special to the WJN

Chaverim B'Shirim will perform composer Harold Rome songs at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor on Sunday, December 13, at 3 p.m.

Chaverim B'Shirim will perform selected songs from Rome's popular Broadway musical, *Call Me Mister,* which ran for 734 performances in late 1940s. The musical celebrated the joys of civilian life and gave expression to the post-war euphoria sweeping the United States. Chaverim B'Shirim director Marilyn Krimm promises that the performance will be very enjoyable, especially the choir rendition of "South America, Take It Away." The choir will also perform excerpts from Rome's *The Zulu and The Zayda,* and *Fanny* at the concert.

Rome's first Broadway musical revue, *Pins and Needles,* was sponsored and performed by members of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. It had the longest run of any musical during the 1930s and the production reflected a new socially conscious outlook that followed Roosevelt's presidency. Rome wrote several other revues and shows following *Call Me Mister* throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and in 1982, he was inducted into the Songwriters Hall Of Fame. Chaverim's B'Shirim will celebrate Rome's musical legacy at both their December concert and their spring concert in April 2010.

Chaverim B'Shirim promises an exceptional afternoon of music and song as they honor the works of an exceptional songwriter. Admission is a $5 donation and refreshments will be served. The event is sponsored by the Marilyn and Sam Krimm Musical Arts Fund. For more information about the concert, call 971-0990 or email lesliebash@jccfed.org.

Plan now for March 2010 AIPAC Policy Conference

Florence Gerber, special to the WJN

The AIPAC Policy Conference is the pro-Israel community's preeminent annual gathering. Register today and join more than 6,000 community and student activists from all 50 states, more than half of the Senate, a third of the House of Representatives and countless Israeli and American policymakers and opinion leaders. Past speakers includ Hillary Clinton, Newt Gingrich, Steny Hoyer, John McCain, Benjamin Netanyahu, Barack Obama, and Nancy Pelosi.

For more than half a century, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee has worked to help make Israel more secure by ensuring that American support remains strong. As America's leading pro-Israel lobby, AIPAC works with both Democratic and Republican political leaders to enact public policy that strengthens the vital U.S.-Israel relationship. With the support of its members nationwide, AIPAC has worked with Congress and the Executive Branch on numerous critical initiatives—from securing vital foreign aid for Israel to passing legislation aimed at stopping Iran's illicit nuclear program.

From March 21–23, 2010, Policy Conference delegates will have the opportunity to choose from dozens of informative sessions and participate in the pro-Israel community's largest advocacy day.

On Monday evening attend the Gala Banquet with two thirds of Congress, foreign diplomats and staff from the Obama administration. On Tuesday visit your congressional representative and Senators Levin and Stabenow.

Register by December 31, 2009, to receive a $100 early bird discount. For more information, check www.aipac.org or call Florence Gerber at 973-2593.

WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

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Extra copies of the *Washtenaw Jewish News* are available at locations throughout Washtenaw County.

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Jewish Community Center to host Harvey Ovshinsky's "How to Complete Your First Movie Script in Six Months"

Sharlan Douglas, special to the WJN

Have you ever dreamed about writing your own screenplay? Do you see yourself as the next Larry Kasdan (*Raiders of the Lost Ark*), Bruce Joel Rubin (*Ghost)* or Nora Ephron (*Julie and Julia)*? How do you start? Where do you go to learn how to write your first movie script?

The answer is the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor where, starting in January, local awarding-winning screenwriter and documentary producer Harvey Ovshinsky will host his popular screenwriters support group, "How to Complete Your First Movie Script in Six Months," co-sponsored by the Michigan Production Alliance.

Ovshinsky's group has been created specifically for aspiring screenwriters who feel the need for extra direction, motivation, and personal attention. "Although we teach the nuts and bolts, learning how to write a movie isn't that difficult," Ovshinsky said, "The real challenge for new or frustrated writers is what do you do, where do you go for support while you're actually *writing* your first screenplay? That's the hard part and that's where we come in."

In the past, Ovshinsky has presented his popular "How to Complete Your First Movie Script in Six Months" screenwriters group at Cranbrook, the Community House in Birmingham and The Grosse Pointe War Memorial. The JCC is Ovshinsky's first Ann Arbor venue.

"'Every writer needs an address,'" said Ovshinsky, quoting Isaac Bashevis Singer. "So do writing teachers, which is why I'm delighted the JCC of Greater Ann Arbor is our group's address in Washtenaw county."

The Detroit News has described Ovshinsky as "one of the country's finest storytellers." He wrote the award-winning script, *The Keyman*. His Movie-of-the-Week script, *PJ and the Dragon,* was represented by Creative Artists Agency (CAA) and optioned by Longbow Productions (*A League of Their Own*).

Harvey Ovshinsky and his Ann Arbor-based video production and story consulting company, HKO Media, have been awarded broadcasting's highest honors including a national Emmy, a Peabody, a duPont-Columbia University Award and the American Film Institute's Robert M. Bennett Award for Excellence.

Harvey Ovshinsky

Ovshinsky has won awards at both the Toronto and San Francisco Jewish Film Festivals. His film about Franklin artist Arthur Schneider was honored at the Detroit Film Theatre at the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Lenore Marwil Jewish Film Festival. HKO Media has produced videos for the Jewish Vocational Society (JVS), the Jewish Community Council of Metropolitan Detroit, and the Jewish Federation of Washtenaw County.

"Harvey's gift," recalls Jeanette Keramedjian, former director of the Cranbrook PM program which first introduced Ovshinsky's screenwriting workshops and groups, "is that he combines his real world knowledge of the industry with a hands-on teaching style that is as nurturing and supportive as I have seen in any classroom."

"For me, this work is deeply personal as well as professional," Ovshinsky said. "I believe each one of us has the power to light up the world with our stories. The trick is to find a way to fan the flames of our creativity so that others can see the light that shines inside."

Ovshinsky taught screenwriting and documentary filmmaking at Wayne State University. He has been a guest lecturer at the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Eastern Michigan University, Oakland University, Madonna University, Schoolcraft College and Macomb County Community College. His series of videotaped lectures, *Letters to a Young Filmmaker*, is fast becoming a viral sensation on YouTube and a popular teaching tool in many film schools.

"We're very excited that the Jewish Community Center can bring Harvey's screenwriters' group to our community," said Leslie Bash, JCC executive director. "With so much interest in the state's film incentives, more and more people are looking for ways to tell their stories in the form of movie scripts. We may be the 'people of the book,'" Bash adds with a smile, "but I believe history has shown that Jews can also be very adept at putting pen to paper." Harvey Ovshinsky's screenwriting group, "How to Complete Your First Movie Script in Six Months," will meet at the JCC from 7–10 p.m. on the first Monday of every month, starting on January 4, 2010, and ending on June 7, 2010. Participants will receive a sample script, a complete bibliography of screenwriting books, publications, and contests, plus information about helpful computer formatting software. Also included is the latest version of Ovshinsky's popular, *The Ten Most Important First Rules of Storytelling.*

The cost for all six group sessions is $300 for students, and members of the Michigan Production Alliance. General admission is $325. To register call Leslie Bash at 971-0990. For more information, call 996-8011. ■

Co-founders of Hand in Hand Schools to speak December 9

Eileen Freed, special to the WJN

Lee Gordon and Amin Khalaf, co-founders of Hand in Hand Schools in Israel will speak on Wednesday, December 9, at 7:30 p.m. at Beth Israel Congregation. While there is no cost for the program, pre-registration is required.

Hand in Hand Schools, founded in 1998, has grown to a network of elementary and middle schools in four locations in Israel. The schools educate Jewish and Arab children and offer a bilingual, bi-cultural curriculum. The talk, sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, will explore the state of integrated Jewish/Arab education in Israel and its future prospects as the project enters its second decade.

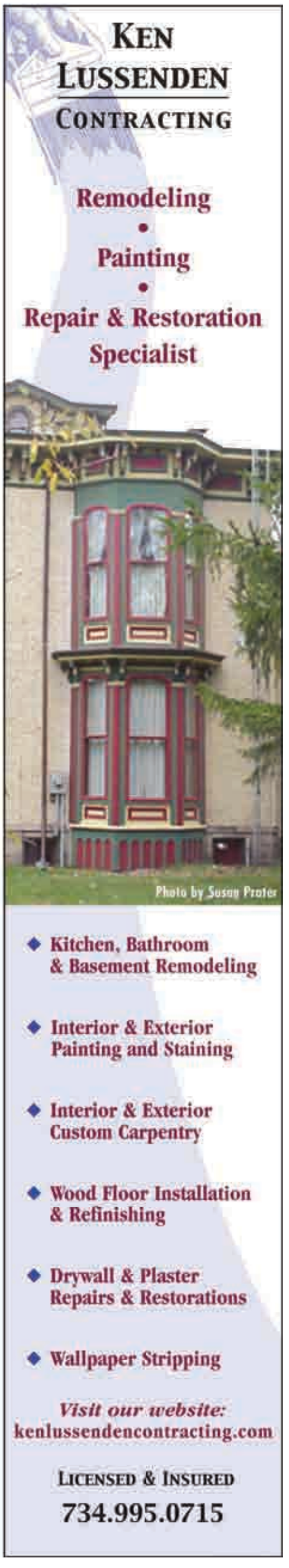
Jewish and Arab school children at Hand in Hand school in the Galilee.

Khalaf currently serves as president of Hand in Hand. Born in the Israeli Arab village of Muqeble in the Galilee, he earned his bachelor of art and masters degrees at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He has taught in both Arab and Jewish public schools in Jerusalem and lectures on education at the David Yellin College of Education in Jerusalem.

Originally from the United States, Gordon lived in Israel for two decades, during which he was actively involved in Jewish-Arab dialogue and partnership projects. Gordon earned an masters degree in social work from the Hebrew University and graduated from the Mandel Institute's prestigious School for Educational Leadership. He currently serves as executive director of American Friends of Hand in Hand which works to raise support and awareness of the schools throughout the United States.

The Federation has made annual allocations to Hand in Hand since 2005, and has made several visits to its schools in the Galilee and Kafr Kana. The 2009 allocation provides funding to implement a leadership and social justice program for sixth graders in the Galilee school.

To RSVP, contact Cindy Adams at cindy@jewishannarbor.org or 677-0100. For more information, email Eileen Freed at eileenfreed@jewishannarbor.org. ■



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Jewish Women's Circle meets for friendship, creativity, and learning

Mae Sander, special to the WJN

The Jewish Women's Circle of Washtenaw County is celebrating mitzvot this fall. At the meeting on December 7 at 7:30 p.m., the group will make candles and talk about candle-lighting in Jewish tradition. Participants will also discuss the role of candles in celebrating Shabbat, Chanukah, and other festivals. The goals of the Women's Circle are to enable participants to develop friendships, learn about a wide range of Jewish topics, and foster their creativity.

At the two earlier meetings this fall, participants made challah and learned more about its meaning, and visited Ann Arbor's mikvah and learned about this Jewish tradition and how it is continued today. Each of the first three Women's Circle topics relates to a particular mitzvah for women.

At the challah-making meeting in September, old and new attendees had a chance to get to know one another while sharing the experience of forming and baking the dough. Twenty-four women came together for this activity, including one who had just arrived by plane that day for a stay in Ann Arbor. Each participant made her own small loaf of challah to take home. Esther Goldstein, one of the organizers, says "As women we have the privilege of making challah and lighting candles—part of the mitzvah of honoring Shabbat."

To begin the October meeting, the 14 participants introduced themselves by describing a mitzvah (good deed) in her experience. One woman had recently made a major commitment as a volunteer at Jewish Family Services. Others mentioned small things like taking a field trip with a child's class, telephoning an older or unwell friend, receiving help with leaf-raking, or just giving a hug at the right moment. Esther Goldstein, who led the meeting, then discussed various meanings of the word mitzvah, including ethical and humanistic obligations and religious obligations. She then explained about the mikvah and its relationship to Jewish family life. The group watched a video and toured the mikvah at Chabad House. Opportunities to ask questions and discuss the topic occurred throughout the evening.

The January meeting will be held on Monday, January 25, at 7:30 p.m. The topic embodies a change of pace: "Reflect, Relax, Renew: Low Impact Yoga and Personal Reflection." In celebration of the secular New Year, the group will explore a dimension of spiritual and physical activity through an evening's yoga practice with Ann Arbor yoga instructor Rachel Portnoy. Attendees are asked to wear comfortable clothing in which they can do yoga and to bring a large towel or (if they have one) a yoga mat.

At the Chabad House mikvah

All Jewish women in the community are invited to the Jewish Women's Circle meetings, no matter what their religious affiliations or non-affiliations are. Organizers are Esther Goldstein, Mimi Weisberg, and others. Organizers maintain a Facebook page, entries on community calendars, and an email list to inform participants of activities and the location of each meeting. For those who would like to sponsor the Circle, an annual voluntary contribution of $54 is requested. There is a meeting fee of $10. ■

For more information about Women's Circle events, contact Esther Goldstein at 995-3276 or esther@jewmich.com or Mimi Weisberg at mimi.weisberg@gmail.com.

Beth Israel Women's League news

Florence Gerber, special to the WJN

Beth Israel Cafe

The third Beth Israel Café sponsored by Women's League will be held on Sunday, December 6, from 9 a.m. to noon at Beth Israel Congregation. Men and women are invited to relax, nosh, and shmooz. Other Beth Israel Cafes will be held on January 17, February 14, and April 18, also at 9 a.m.

December meeting

Vanessa Ochs, research fellow at the University of Michigan Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies will explain her research "Beyond the Menorah and Tzedaka box: How do Objects Make a Jewish Home Jewish?" on Thursday, December 10 at 7:45 p.m. at Beth Israel Congregation.

Vanessa Ochs

Ochs, associate professor of religious studies at the University of Virginia, is an anthropologist of Jewish life. Ochs will report on research that includes the Ann Arbor community and the households of Beth Israel Women's League members.

Ochs is the author of numerous works, including *Inventing Jewish Ritual*, winner of a 2007 National Jewish Book Award; *Sarah Laughed*; *The Jewish Dream Book* (with Elizabeth Ochs); and *Words on Fire*. For her writing, she was awarded a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. She was also scholar in residence at the most recent Women's League Biennial Convention.

Women's League Chanukah Gift Shop

Do your Chanuah shopping at Women's League Gift Shop on Sunday mornings or Wednesday afternoons during religious school. For an appointment, call Doris Miller at 662-5926.

The Gift Shop is selling all occasion cards (milestone, get well, mazal tov, condolence, special occasion, rejoicing, thank you, and new baby) to benefit the Jewish Theological Seminary, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, and the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies. All cards are $2 except for new baby, which sell for $3. Women's League member Sherri Peller (994-4013 or sgpeller@comcast.net) will mail cards for purchasers for an extra $1 per card.

Hadassah Chanukah celebration

Annette F. Fisch, special to the WJN

On Thursday, December 17, at 7:30 p.m., the Ann Arbor Chapter of Hadassah will celebrate Chanukah at the home of Julie Ellis, 3929 Waldenwood. Attendees should bring a regiftable item for the "white elephant gift" exchange, and bring an appetite for latkes. Reserve by December 13 to Martha Young, 769-7523 or youngmmarth@comcast.net.

ORT Chanukah party

Joan Levitt, special to the WJN

The Ann Arbor chapter of ORT America will hold its Annual "Chai'Nukah" party on Sunday, December 6, from 3–5 p.m., at the Community Room at Nature Cove Condominiums, 2115 Nature Cove Court.

The party will feature a Latke Cook-off, with participants sharing their favorite latkes and the latke recipe. There will be prizes for the best latkes. There will also be a "white elephant accessory" exchange. Guests should wrap a favorite, gently-used accessory, such as a scarf, purse, or jewelry, for a Chanukah gift exchange. ORT members and prospective members are welcome to join the fun. In the spirit of "Chai," all party-goers are asked to make an $18 donation to ORT America. Rides to the party are available to those who need them.

ORT America supports World ORT's schools and high-tech training programs in 62 countries, empowering 300,000 students and beneficiaries annually. The cutting edge education acquired at ORT schools, colleges, and international programs provide marketable skills that enable students to attain successful careers, become community leaders, and live with dignity. ORT's global network educates individuals, impacts communities, and improves the world.

For more information or to RSVP, call Jeanne Thomas at 429-5948, or send an email to jthoma25@gmail.com, with "ORT RSVP" in the subject line.

SPICE* of Life

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December and January

Tuesdays

11 a.m. – *Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar.* $4 per session, or 3 sessions for $10

Noon – *Dairy Lunch Buffet.* $3 per person

1 p.m. – *Games and Activities.* Join in for a variety of games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects, and other card games. *New* Bridge club at 1 p.m.

1:30 p.m. – *Yidish Tish* (Yiddish Conversational Group). Open to the public as well as University of Michigan faculty, staff and students, all ages and levels welcome. Beanster's Café, ground floor, Michigan League. Free. For more information, call 936-2367.

Thursdays

10 a.m. – *Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar.* $4 per session, or 3 sessions for $10

11 a.m. – *Current Events with Heather Dombey.* A Jewish perspective on this week's news. Bring items of interest for group discussion.

Noon – *Dairy Lunch Buffet.* $3 per person

1 p.m. – *Thursday Special Events and Presentations* (see box for details)

2:15 p.m. – *Literary Group* facilitated by Sidney Warschausky, Call Merrill Poliner, 971-0990, for more information and the current book.

Fridays

1:30 p.m.– *Yiddish Reading Group* at the Jewish Community Center. Call Ray Juni for additional information at 761-2765

Thursday special events and presentations

December 3

12:30 p.m. Birthday celebration for all with December birthdays. Bring your family and friends for lunch and birthday cake. 1 p.m. Mariko Foulke, social worker at the University of Michigan Turner Clinic, will lead a presentation and discussion on depression and older adults.

December 10

12:30 p.m. A registered nurse from Care Response will take and record blood pressures and address any questions. Free. (This event is repeated the second Thursday of each month.)

1 p.m. The first decade after World War II witnessed major changes in how we lived: family, housing, education, music, appliances and work. Join the fun in remembering what you were doing back when.

December 17

11 a.m. Join the children, families and staff of the JCC's Early Childhood Center for an intergenerational Chanukah celebration including singing, dancing, crafts and discussion.

12:30 p.m. Allison Pollock, MSW, Jewish Family Services geriatric social worker will be available for discussion, questions and assistance.

1 p.m. Rabbi Levy of Temple Beth Emeth joins SPICE for Chanukah.

December 24

1 p.m. Local stand-up comedienne, Paddy Ash, will entertain the group with her healthy humor.

December 31

1 p.m. Come to the JCC for an hour of favorite comedian, Jack Benny, the archetypal ongeblozen tightwad on video.

January 7

12:30 p.m. Birthday celebration for all with January birthdays. Bring your family and friends for lunch and birthday cake. 1 p.m. A representative from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Michigan will illustrate how to get information about one's ancestors.

January 14

12:30 p.m. A registered nurse from Care Response will take and record blood pressures and address any questions. Free. (The second Thursday of each month.)

1 p.m. University of Michigan School of Music violin performance student, Paul Dryden Trapkus will perform a recital.

January 21

12:30 p.m. Allison Pollock, MSW, Jewish Family Services geriatric social worker will be available for discussion, questions and assistance.

1 p.m. Arie Lipsky, musical director of the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra, returns to the JCC for music and discussion.

January 28

1 p.m. University of Michigan doctoral student, Tam Perry, will facilitate a presentation and discussion on the various ways that the process of moving may affect seniors.

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JStreet Conference historic event

Clare Kinberg, special to the WJN

Several Jews from Ann Arbor joined the overflow crowds at the JStreet Conference "Driving Change, Securing Peace: The First National Conference for Progressive Pro-Israel, Pro-Peace Advocates," October 25–28 in Washington, D.C.

"The feeling there was of participating in a historic moment," says Tamar Weaver, an Israeli American and member of Ann Arbor's Brit Tzedek v'Shalom chapter. Weaver describes the experience, "The conference began for me with the greetings from Tzipi Livni, representing the largest Israeli political party and from Shimon Peres, Israeli president… the atmosphere was euphoric—finally, American Jews coming together to show an interest in loving Israel and recognizing the different voices in the Israeli public."

Rebecca Kanner and Aaron Ahuvia

Fifteen hundred people attended the two-day conference, followed by a day of lobbying on Capitol Hill. The Michigan delegation met directly with Representatives Sandor Levin and Mark Schauer, and with staff people in the offices of Debbie Stabanow, John Conyers, Dale Kildee and John Kilpatrick. Each member of Congress was asked to make a public statement expressing support for the peace process.

The conference also marked the official merger of Brit Tzedek v'Shalom with JSteet. Brit Tzedek staff and members now are field organizers for JStreet. Last year the campus-based Union of Progressive Zionists (UPZ) also merged with JStreet, becoming the campus wing. The span of ages at the conference was noted in several reports; young, old and in the middle came together with a common agenda of supporting Israel to reach a negotiated two-state solution. The workshops and plenaries were standing room only. Another participant from Ann Arbor, Rebecca Kanner, attended a workshop titled "How to Stop Talking to Ourselves," in which Rabbi Melissa Weintraub described her work arranging opportunities for American and Israeli Jewish leaders—including federation directors, rabbis, and even settlers—to meet with Palestinians in Israel and the West Bank.

The delegates returned to Ann Arbor inspired by the hope and energy of the conference. Both the Ann Arbor Brit Tzedek v'Shalom chapter and University of Michigan Hillel's UPZ have several programs in the works for the coming year. ■

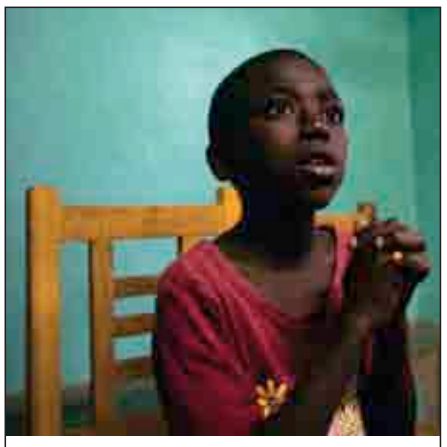
JFS partners with Red Cross for refugee awareness program on December 10

Mira Sussman, special to the WJN

In celebration of Red Cross Red Crescent's 150th anniversary, the Washtenaw County Red Cross Chapter is participating in "Expressions of Humanity Week," December 4–December 11. Jewish Family Services is partnering by sponsoring a one-night event, "Building New Lives—Refugees in Washtenaw County" on Thursday, December 10, 7-9 p.m. at the Ann Arbor Art Center, 117 West Liberty Street. The event is free and open to the public.

The Resettlement Program at JFS assists refugees and their families with critical social services needed to ease their transition into a new way of living. With this help, individuals become self-sufficient and are able to create a stable living environment in the Ann Arbor area. Since August 2008, JFS has helped resettle nearly 100 refugees, mainly from war-torn Iraq, with hundreds more families resettled from around the world since JFS began in 1993.

Come hear first-person accounts from refugees of the Iraq War—their experiences in Iraq, in transit, and here in Michigan.



EXPRESSIONS OF HUMANITY

December 4, 2009 through January 3, 2010

For other Expressions of Humanity Week events, including lectures, panel presentations, photo and art exhibits, go to www.jfsannarbor.org or www.wc-redcross.org.

Jewish Family Services accredited by CARF

Robin Little, special to WJN

Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for a period of three years. This achievement is an indication of the agency's dedication and commitment to improving the quality of the lives of the clients served. This accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation that can be awarded to an organization and shows the organization's substantial conformance to the CARF standards. An organization receiving a three-year accreditation has put itself through a rigorous peer review process and has demonstrated to a team of surveyors during an on-site visit that its programs and services are of the highest quality, measurable and accountable.

CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accrediting body whose mission is to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process that centers on enhancing the lives of persons served. Founded in 1996 as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, and now known as CARF, the accrediting body established consumer-focused standards to help organizations measure and improve the quality of their programs and services.

Following a two-day site visit in August, the CARF report was received in October. The report outlined multiple areas of strength at JFS, including:

- Exceptional, dedicated, and forward-looking board of directors
- Positive, strong, and vibrant leadership
- Knowledgeable, capable, highly-motivated and dedicated staff
- Supportive funders who see JFS as a model for other community agencies
- Respect for the individual cultural diversity of clients served
- Dedication to quality assurance and improvement

With goals of long-term sustainability and financial viability, JFS will now be engaged in efforts that leverage the capacity building and financial opportunities afforded by CARF accreditation. These efforts include moving forward with third party billing for reimbursement of services (i.e., assistance with immigration and naturalization, support for aging in place and mental health counseling) that are covered by both government and private insurance providers.

JFS received grants from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation, and the James A. & Faith Knight Foundation, that helped to fund the staffing and other agency costs associated with accreditation. ■

JCorps founder wins first Jewish Community Heroes award

By Jacob Berkman

NEW YORK (JTA)—After weeks of deliberation and the tally of more than 600,000 online votes, the Jewish Federations of North America has named its first Jewish Community Hero—Ari Teman, the founder of JCorps.

A panel of judges from outside the federation system chose Teman, 27, for the $25,000 Jewish Community Heroes prize after whittling down a list of more than 400 nominees.

Ari Teman

The Jewish Federations announced the choice Tuesday at the closing plenary session of its General Assembly conference in Washington. The contest was part of the federation system's new multimillion-dollar marketing and rebranding strategy to broaden its base of support.

Teman's organization sets up young Jews with volunteer opportunities in nine cities over three continents—all while working on virtually no budget.

Teman, a standup comedian by day, runs JCorps as a volunteer on a budget that is probably less than the award he will take home. Yet the organization has enlisted some 10,000 volunteers for local community service projects in the United States, Canada and Israel.

"This will enable us to take in a lot more volunteers rapidly without having to worry, 'Do we have to slow it down because we can't afford to bring more people in?' " Teman told JTA.

Teman said he started JCorps in 2007 on something of a late-night whim about how he could meet more Jewish people.

The money will help the program expand and perhaps allow Teman to hire his first professional staff member.

"The first year we started with $300," he said. "We like to say that if we had no money we could still keep running, which is great, because it means the money we put in is for growth."

Senior photography exhibit at JCC

All photographers 55 and over are invited to submit recent photographs to the JCC's Senior Photography Exhibit. Photographers can submit up to six photographs of new work, any size, suitable for hanging. Call Merrill Poliner at the JCC at 971-0990 for more information and applications.

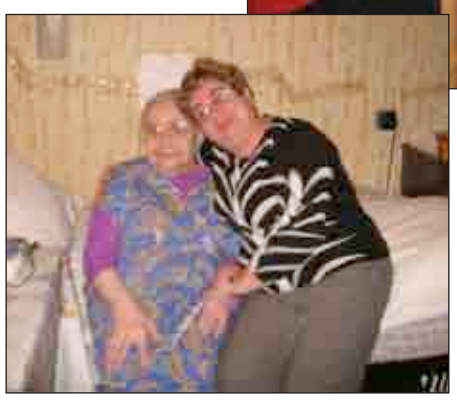
Local couple visits Jewish groups operating in Russia

Eileen Freed, special to the WJN

When Sheldon and Geri Markel signed up for a University of Michigan alumni tour of Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia, they thought they should see and learn more about the local Jewish community. Since this was not a part of the group's itinerary, they turned to the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. Federation staff contacted the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), whose staff arranged a variety of visits for the Markels.

The JDC operates a wide range of programs and institutions in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) including Jewish community centers and a network of social service agencies for senior services called Hesed Avot. In Moscow, the Markels visited the Nikitskaya Jewish Cultural Center (JCC) and were impressed with the range and quality of programming. "The center was so busy; there was something happening for every age throughout the building," said Sheldon of his visit. The center, located in a renovated mansion, offers classes and programs for children and adults of all ages, including dance, yoga, fitness, theater, art and a wide range of Jewish classes and experiences. "I was quite impressed with the sophisticated ceramics and animation studios and the quality of the work," recalled Geri.

Markels do crafts with pre-school children at the Moscow JCC



Bronislava Roubanova (left) and her home care aide

In St. Petersburg, the Markels visited YESOD, St. Petersburg's newly renovated "Jewish Community Home." In addition to a similar high level and variety of programming, YESOD houses an impressive theater and offers a range of services to senior citizens including medical consultation, a hair salon, volunteer opportunities and hot meals. "The seniors are living on a very small pension," said Geri. "These services help keep them involved in the community and living a meaningful life."

JDC staff brought the Markels to the home of Bronislava Mikhailvona Roubanova, a 79-year-old woman who is confined to her fourth floor apartment due to ill health and disability. "From the outside, the building looked fine," said Sheldon, "but on the inside, the paint was peeling and there was exposed electrical wire. The apartment was a tiny room with a bed and a kitchen sink; not much more." Roubanova, who survived the German siege of Leningrad (St. Petersburg), never married, suffers from epilepsy and other medical conditions, and has no family to care for her. If it were not for the 80 hours of home care a month provided by Hesed, she would be completely alone and unlikely to survive on her pension of $414 a month.

"This was a very important visit for us. It is important for people in Ann Arbor to be aware of the very difficult situation of the elderly in the FSU as well as the impressive renaissance of the Jewish community," said Sheldon. "A portion of the overseas allocation made by the Jewish Federation goes to the JDC to pay for these necessary services. I'm so glad I had the opportunity to see these projects first-hand." Geri added that, "in spite of their heavy workload, the JDC staff was able to accommodate us on very short notice. I was very impressed with their professionalism and the care they clearly put into every aspect of our visit."

To learn more about enriching visits to Jewish communities while traveling abroad, contact Eileen Freed at eileenfreed@jewishannarbor.org or 677-0100. ■

Sheldon and Geri Markel in St. Petersburg, Russia

JPros offers professional development

Mira Sussman and Eileen Freed, special to the WJN

It may come as a surprise, but Ann Arbor's Jewish community is home to a group that exists in only eleven other cities in North America. Despite the community's small size, it is home to something that Toronto, Atlanta, Chicago and Detroit do not have—a group dedicated to the continued education and development of its Jewish professional leadership.

Leaders of local Jewish professional development groups gather in Malibu.

The local organization, Jewish Professionals of Greater Ann Arbor (aka JPros) is open to all professional staff who work for Jewish agencies, synagogues, schools and organizations, and is in its third year as an active group. Members run the gamut of professions; from rabbis to administrators, teachers to development directors, program staff to service generalists. JPros' mission is to enhance its members' skills, facilitate communication among colleagues from different organizations, and encourage the highest professional standards and community esteem for its members—all with an eye towards strengthening professional service to the community.

In November, Steering Committee Chair Mira Sussman, represented the Ann Arbor JPros at a professional development conference, "Professional Excellence in Challenging Times," in Malibu, California. The conference featured keynote speaker Rabbi Mark Charendoff, president of the Jewish Funders Network. Breakout groups included "Negotiating the Multi-Generational Workplace," "New Approaches to Supervision in the Down Economy," and "Building Community in a Digital World." The Jewish Communal Professionals of Southern California organized the conference.

In addition, Sussman participated in programming specifically designed for the fifteen local group leaders who represented their local chapters. They discussed successes and challenges faced in local chapters, networked with peers, and discussed how to better guide the local efforts.

In Ann Arbor, the theme for the year's programming is "Boundaries." The group will explore how boundaries serve to protect those working for Jewish agencies, as well as how to overcome boundaries that hinder individuals and agencies from better serving the community. Ann Arbor is blessed with a wealth of Jewish and secular resources, and the JPros Steering Committee looks forward to another year of development for its Jewish professional leadership. ■

For more information about JPros, become a fan on Facebook, or email Mira at mira@jfsannarbor.org.

Lullaby on Broadway Concert fitting memorial

Merrill Polliner, special to the WJN

On Sunday, October 25, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor was host to five performers from the Michigan Opera Theatre's Community Programs Department. For 39 years, the Michigan Opera Theatre, one of the country's ten largest opera companies, has been regarded as one of the finest cultural resources in the State of Michigan. For 31 of those years, the MOT's Community Programs Department has brought varied musical programs to many groups in Michigan.

Paul DiPietro, Alice Fishman, and Michael DiPietro (center front) with members of the Detroit Opera Theater.

What could have been a somber occasion became an afternoon of musical pleasure during the "Lullaby of Broadway Concert" sponsored by the Fishman-DiPietro fund.

The fund was created in memory of Sybil Fishman and Pauline DiPietro, the mothers of Alice Fishman and Michael DiPietro, with the purpose of providing special events for the seniors of the JCC. The concept of a musical afternoon with a Broadway theme was decided in honor of Steve Fishman's long and successful career as a property master on Broadway. Steve passed away on October18, 2009, and the concert became his memorial.

The performance, attended by over 110 people, exceeded the expectations of the concert sponsors, organizers and audience with a program that included selections of vocal music by Irving Berlin; Rodgers and Hart; Lerner and Lowe; Bizet; and Andrew Lloyd-Webber and a solo piano arrangement of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." The audience participated with a sing-a-long version of "Always," one of Steve's favorite songs.

The Fishman-DiPietro family and the JCC are looking forward to another concert in the series sometime in the Spring of 2010.

Chanukah lights

Rabbi Ahron Goldstein, special to the WJN

Chanukah! The Festival of Lights. Most of us learned the story of the Maccabees—how the few overcame the many and the weak vanquished the strong.

Most of us learned the story of the miracle of the oil—the oil that lasted eight days. After defeating the Hellenists, when the Jews entered the Temple to rededicate it, they found one small jar of oil, enough to light the menorah for one day. It would take another seven days to obtain new, pure oil. They lit the menorah, and the lamps burned for eight days.

Most of us learned the story of Hannah and her seven sons. And the story of Judith, who beheaded Holofernes. Yes, there are many stories associated with Chanukah, many miracles, many lessons.

But the lights themselves tell a story. Or rather, they have something important to say, a lesson that penetrates the darkness, the daily distractions from holiness. As the previous Lubavitcher Rebbe said, "One must listen to what the lights relate."

One of the laws of Chanukah is: "The candle of Chanukah should be placed by the opening (doorway), close to the outside."

The candle: What is the concept of a candle? One takes oil and a wick—physical objects, and a person kindles these physical objects until they catch fire, producing a flame that is visible to the physical eye. This tells us what we accomplish through "a mitzvah (commandment) is a candle and Torah is light" (Proverbs 6:23). The "mitzvah candle" produces a spiritual flame that will be visible to the physical eye in the times of Moshiach.

Of Chanukah: This alludes to the double concept of dedication and education—the double meaning of the word *chinuch*, from which Chanukah comes. There must be a dedication and initiation of something new in the celebration and establishment of holiness, just as occurred when the altar and Temple were dedicated—re-dedicated—in those days at this time. It also alludes to education and Torah study: the mitzvah of the Chanukah candle teaches those who fulfill the commandment and instructs all within one's "circle of influence." What is this innovative teaching, this new order of Divine service? Simply that, just as we increase the light of Chanukah each night, so, too, we must continuously increase our learning, increase the light of Torah we bring into the world.

Should be placed: The candles are lit where they are placed. And they are set in place. Let them stand where they are, without moving them or changing their position. Similarly, one's Divine service—one's order of learning Torah, one's schedule of mitzvoth—should be fixed, the routine of one's life, installed in one's soul.

By the opening: This fits with the great principle of the Torah, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18). How should one perform the above mentioned Divine service? In an open way, a way that is seen, that enlightens (a true enlightenment—that of Torah and mitzvot), a way that influences others, those "outside" one's self. Which brings us to ...

Close to the outside: Chanukah, the menorah, its message, Judaism itself must be placed near, made available to, all those who, for whatever reason, are "outside" (albeit temporarily) the concepts of Chanukah. This means, those who are yet—momentarily—"outside" Judaism in general.

And may it be the will of the source of life, who with His light, His Torah, instructs us in our daily lives—may He give His blessings to everyone, in matters internal and spiritual and matters external and public, in the most exemplary fashion.

And may we receive the ultimate blessing, in a way visible to all, the complete Redemption through Moshiach, when the menorah in the Temple will again be lit and send its message—tell its story—to all mankind. ■

Chanukah Wonderland offered by Chabad

Chana Kroll, special to the WJN

Jewish families looking for an interesting and exciting way to bring the holiday of Chanukah to life won't have far to look this winter. Local community member Shternie Zweibel—known to many parents and kids as the director of Camp Gan Israel programs—will once again be using her formidable organizational skills, and her well-honed sense of fun, to provide the third annual Chanukah Wonderland in Ann Arbor.

The Wonderland will be open to the public from Sunday December 13 to Wednesday, December 16, with a live fire juggling show kicking off events on Sunday afternoon. Throughout the week, there will be a wide selection of crafts activities, games, live entertainment, videos, and other programming. There will be a menorah lighting each evening at 5:30 p.m.. This year the Chanukah Wonderland will be located in the Briarwood mall in the Sears wing, next to H&M.

"There is really something there for every age group, and there is enough variety to keep kids interested throughout the week," reported Ann Arbor resident Stacey Lee, who took her then three- and six-year-old daughters to last year's Wonderland. "We went several times last year and because of it we really were able to keep up the excitement of Chanukah all week," she added.

"A big part of this event is the community atmosphere," said Zweibel, "and the chance it provides for Jewish parents to do what other parents have always been able to do—to take their kids to the mall and have a fun holiday experience, one that relates to what their family is celebrating at home."

Lee concurred, saying that "It is so nice this time of year to have our own holiday space and to be able to go there, to run into other families from the community and say hello, to really be celebrating Chanukah together as a community."

Some of the popular attractions that will be returning from previous years include a chance for kids to dress up as Judah the Macabee and have their picture taken, and help build a giant Lego menorah. Also returning to the Chanukah Wonderland will be an olive oil press kids can use to make their own olive oil for menorah lighting, a candle making workshop, a mini-kitchen where kids (and parents) can make the latkes and jelly doughnuts traditionally eaten at Chanukah, and a moon bounce. In addition, this year's Wonderland will feature a computer center and new arts and crafts kiosks. In between activities, families can relax and have a bite to eat at the kosher Chanukah Café. There will also be a Chanukah superstore.

The Wonderland will be open from 1–7 p.m. on Sunday thru Wednesday . Any schools interested in bringing students on a field trip are invited to contact Zweibel—the Wonderland will be open from 9 a.m.–1 p.m. for schools. ■

Ask the expert: Chanukah bush

From MyJewishLearning.com

Question: My kids (ages 5 and 8) really love Christmas trees. They know that I won't have one in our house because we're Jewish, but recently someone told them about a Chanukah bush, and they've been asking if we can get one of those. How can I explain to them my discomfort with the tradition without seeming like a Grinch?

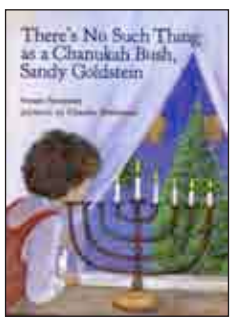
—Henry, Nashville

Answer: Oy. I try to be impartial about these things, Henry, but I'm with you when it comes to Chanukah bushes. I just don't like them.

First of all, you might want to get your hands on the children's book by Susan Sussman called *There's No Such Thing as a Chanukah Bush Sandy Goldstein*. The situation it deals with is not precisely the same as yours, but reading the book might be a good way to start the conversation with your kids.

The concern I think most people have with Chanukah bushes is that they are too close for comfort to Christmas trees. There's not much difference between the two, as far as I can tell. Slapping a Jewish star on something and then calling it a Jewish ritual item is like putting a lion mask on your dog, having him run around in your backyard and calling it a safari.

When you're talking with your kids about this, you can discuss how Jewish holidays aim to keep the traditions and history of the Jewish people alive. You can look at other ritual items you might have in your home—a seder plate, a siddur, a noisemaker, etc.—and talk about how all of them are connected to things in Jewish history. Then talk about a Chanukah bush and how it really doesn't have a Jewish history at all.



One thing that I think is helpful in this kind of situation is focusing on the ways that your kids can celebrate with others without necessarily taking on their ideology. Your kids can visit friends who have Christmas trees, and can enjoy the trees that are out in public spaces. But they should do this to be happy for others, not to take on non-Jewish rituals as their own.

The best way to combat Christmas envy is to amp up your own Chanukah celebrations in ways that aren't purely derivative of Christian traditions. Consider making your own window decorations to help publicize the mitzvah of lighting Chanukah candles. Make Chanukah foods from scratch (*latkes* and *sufganiyot* are Ashkenazi options, or try Sephardi/Mizrahi *bimuelos* and *atayef*), and set up a dreidel tournament. You can even have a contest in your family to see who can make the most interesting *chanukiyah* from things around the house. The eight nights of Chanukah are also a great opportunity to invite friends to celebrate with you.

I think the key to really getting your children to enjoy all of these holiday activities is to steer the conversation away from direct comparisons to Christmas. Celebrating Chanukah shouldn't be about providing an alternative to Christmas. If you bill it that way, you'll always lose out to Santa and Christmas trees.

Chanukah is about focusing on maintaining a Jewish identity even in the face of a strong cultural current that defies that sentiment.

Another way to focus the discussion is to remind your kids about all of the holidays on the Jewish calendar. After Chanukah we have Tu b'Shvat, then Purim and Passover. You can talk about the traditions that go with these holidays, and all the exciting and fun traditions that lead up to them, whether it's making small gifts for friends at Purim or searching the house for *chametz* at Passover.

If you own a children's book or game about the Jewish calendar, now is a great time to bring it out. If you have family pictures from Jewish holidays in years past, this is a great time to look at them. Kids love looking at how much they've changed and grown up, and enjoy reminiscing about how they celebrated holidays—buying new clothes for Rosh Hashanah, eating together in a sukkah, etc.

As the secular year comes to a close, you can take the time to look forward to the whole cycle of wonderful Jewish holidays that will begin again next year.

Good luck and *chag urim sameach*! ■

For more information about Judaism and Jewish life, visit MyJewishLearning.com.

New kids' books hitting the shelves for Chanukah

By Penny Schwartz

BOSTON (JTA)—From all corners of the globe, to under the sea and above the skies, a new crop of children's books for Chanukah takes readers on a worldwide spin with delightful and informative books for kids of all ages.

Hanukkah Around the World
by Tami Lehman-Wilzig,
illustrated by Vicki Wehrman
Kar-Ben; $16.95 hardcover; $7.95 paper; ages 8-11

Move over latkes, make room for precipizi. And sufganiyot, debla cookies and burmelos. These are among the traditional sweets eaten in Jewish homes from Italy to Israel, Tunisia and Turkey during the eight-day Festival of Lights. Recipes for the treats are featured in *Hanukkah Around the World* by Israeli-American children's writer Tami Lehman-Wilzig. The illustrated travelogue takes young readers to eight faraway places around the globe.

First stop, the Israeli city of Modi'in, the ancient biblical home of the Maccabees where the Chanukah story began 2,000 years ago. Today the city comes alive to celebrate its beloved holiday with a relay race to Jerusalem and eight days of kid-friendly festivities, Lehman-Wilzig writes in an e-mail from her home in Israel.

Each of the eight cities featured includes a short fictional story that highlights local customs, historical notes, current events and easy-to-follow recipes. Back pages include Chanukah potpourri from other locales and a glossary.

The custom that most impressed Lehman-Wilzig was in Turin, where a custom connects the summertime observance of Tisha B'Av, commemorating the ancient destruction of the Temple, with Chanukah, recalling the rededication of the Temple.

"It's a wonderful way to close the circle and is a custom to be cherished," she writes.

Menorah Under the Sea
by Esther Susan Heller
Kar-Ben, $17.95; ages 4-8

Menorah Under the Sea is a photo essay-style book that follows the explorations of David Ginsburg, a marine ecologist from Los Angeles who takes readers on an adventure to McMurdo station in Antarctica. The journal-like narrative describes how Ginsburg and his research partner, who arrived in Antarctica on the first night of Chanukah, use rubber dry suits to emerge under the treacherous waters.

While collecting sea urchins and starfish for his research, Ginsburg is inspired suddenly to create a menorah on the sea floor using the neon-like sea urchins and starfish. Captured on film, and reproduced in the book, the glowing menorah is a sparkling and inspiring wonder. Notes at the book's end explain that sea urchins are invertebrates and have no central nervous system. During Ginsburg's menorah assembly, readers are reassured that no animals were harmed.

The Rabbi and the Twenty-Nine Witches
by Marilyn Hirsh
Marshall Cavendish, $17.99; ages 4-9

This is a republication of a Jewish children's classic, by the late Marilyn Hirsh, an internationally acclaimed, award-winning artist and writer. Hirsh brings a light-hearted touch to this old legend from the Talmud about a cave full of witches, frightened villagers, the full moon and a wise rabbi. Her whimsical black-and-white line illustrations, with blue throughout, will delight readers; even the wicked witches are more slapstick than frightening.

Hirsh, who died of cancer in 1988, was a consummate professional and a uniquely talented artist, recalls the noted children's writer David Adler, who worked with Hirsh while he was an editor at the Jewish Publication Society. Adler recalls that in the early 1980s, though she was ill and hospitalized, Hirsh illustrated the JPS's 50th anniversary edition of *The Adventures of K'ton Ton*, the classic Jewish children's series by Sadie Rose Weilerstein.

The Amazing Menorah of Mazeltown
by Hal Dresner and Joy Fate,
illustrated by Neil Shapiro
Red Rock Press, $16.95; ages 4-8.

When Molly and Max find an old, grimy menorah in their father's junk shop, they discover the power of the menorah to transform their dreary town in the dark days of winter.

Happy Hanukkah, Corduroy
Based on the character created by Don Freeman, illustrated by Lisa McCue
Viking, $5.99; ages 6 months to 3 years

The popular, cuddly bear of the classic Don Freeman books enlists the help of his animal friends to celebrate Hanukkah, lighting the menorah, eating latkes, singing, and playing dreidel.

A Chanukah Present for Me!
by Lily Karr, illustrated by Jill McDonald
Scholastic, $6.99; ages 6 months to 3 years

This brightly colored board book is packaged as a gift. Each two-board spread features a Chanukah tradition with large format words and collage illustrations. There are latkes, dreidels, chocolate gelt or coins, fried doughnuts and, of course, colorful candles in a menorah. In the end, a smiling family celebrates.

At Chanukah, lighting up the *tzedakah* stairway

By Edmon J. Rodman

LOS ANGELES (JTA)—What lights the Festival of Lights? What really ignites the eight days, turning them into a hot winter glow?

Is it the oil, the candles, the songs, the latkes, the gifts?

What would you give for an answer?

It's dark and I am walking to Canter's, a famous Los Angeles delicatessen, to buy a half-dozen bagels. I see by the blue and white cookies in their bakery window that it's Chanukah.

Near the entrance, seated on a crate, is a guy who appears to be homeless. Is this his home?

As I pass he holds out a paper cup and shakes it. Coins jingle.

"Any spare change?" he asks.

It's an exchange that happens daily in big cities and small, at the Mobil station, outside the Piggly Wiggly, in the mall parking lot, outside the restaurant. No matter where or how high up you live, it happens. It's happened to me in Beverly Hills.

The question is always same: "Do you have any change?" Yet our responses vary.

At Chanukah time or anytime—on the street, at your door, in the mail or online—there are many ways you can respond to requests for tzedakah.

Maimonides, the influential 12th century Jewish philosopher, wrote that there are "eight degrees of tzedakah, each higher than the next." That is, eight distinct, clarifying ways you can respond to human need. The degrees are like steps progressively rising; kind of an early stairway to heaven.

Proverbs tell us that a "mitzvah is a lamp." On Chanukah we can light up the nights with giving. Consider each step of the tzedakah stairway a candle that is lit each night; each light is an act of giving tzedakah, of doing justice in the world.

The lowest level is giving like a Grinch, too little and with a cheapster attitude, as when a panhandler is in your face and you feel put out.

"Do I look like a sucker?" you wonder. "Isn't there an agency for this?" you think. So you flip him a dime.

The countering Jewish idea in play here is from Devarim, Deuteronomy: "Give to him readily," it says, "and have no regrets."

The second step is the sunny side of the first—still giving too little, but with a smile. Like when a condolence card comes around at work and you pull a five out of your wallet when it's full of twenties. Devarim also tells us when considering the needy, "do not harden your heart and shut your hand … ."

How much is too little? Hey, this isn't a seasonal piece on tipping but on doing justice. Do you need an accountant to paint you a picture?

The third step is giving as much as is needed, but waiting until someone asks.

A tough standard, as most of us don't give until we are approached. The idea here is to cut down on the humiliation for the asker.

Today, when institutions do much of the asking, the concept updates to what if Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters has to ask X number of times in letters or e-mail before we respond? Each letter costs, ultimately diminishing your contribution.

The fourth step flips the third: Giving as much as is needed before being asked. Think about it. This puts the giver on the lookout for tzedakah opportunities. It gets you twittering with finds and on the street, taking note of Jewish social service storefronts.

People put their entire energies into looking for investments, why not tzedakah? Isn't breaking the poverty cycle the best investment?

The fifth step includes the previous elements and adds one more; giving tzedakah when you don't know the recipient but the recipient knows you. It's like having your tzedekah labeled "This gift brought to you by… ."

This uneven equation allows for corporate boasting about its contributions: Remember those ads that ran after Katrina? Still, it's tzedakah.

Sixth step: The recipient is known to the giver, the giver is unknown to the recipient.

Talk about randomness. Imagine leaving a box of groceries at some unknown yet needful person's doorstep. Food pantries like Sova in Los Angeles or the Harvey Kornblum Jewish Food Pantry in St. Louis, where "confidentiality is strictly enforced," illustrate this concept. As a giver, you know the items are going to someone in need, but they never know you.

No. 7: Anonymous giving and receiving. Anonymity is a tough sell today; we are trained from birth to put our names on everything. Historically, in the Temple in Jerusalem there was a darkened room, called "*lishkat chasha'im*," literally a "chamber of secrets," where the giver could leave money and the poor would receive it without shame.

A tzedakah box, or pushke, is a related idea. Pick up a box from your favorite Jewish charity, or make one yourself, and join the righteous ranks of the famous unknown.

The highest level, "exceeded by none," Maimonides tells us, is self-sufficiency as a result of outright gifts, loans, partnerships or "finding employment." At a time when every dollar for the poor is debated, Maimonides reminds us to "strengthen" the poor.

In many cities, Jewish free loan societies, Jewish vocational service agencies and international agencies such as ORT help move people toward self-sufficiency. Handicraft workshops for the needy elderly and disabled such as Yad Lakish in Jerusalem, beautifully keep this concept alive. ■

(Edmon J. Rodman is a JTA columnist who writes on Jewish life from Los Angeles.)

Activities at Beth Israel in December and January

Elliot Sorkin, special to the WJN

Wednesday Lunch and Learn

Rabbi Kim Blumenthal will lead Wednesday Lunch and Learn sessions from noon–1:15 p.m. on a wide range of topics. Participants are asked to bring a dairy lunch with refreshments and desserts being provided free of charge by the congregation. Check the Beth Israel Website (www.bethisrael-aa.org) for the weekly topics. They will take place on December 2, 9, and 16, and January 6, 13, and 20.

Walking with God Part II—Medieval Texts through Modernity

This course, designed by the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, presents a wide range of insights and conceptualizations of God. Through exploring sacred texts of various time periods, students will engage in critical study and grow in their own relationships to God. This course includes reading one short essay in preparation for each session. Each session will include some small group text study and discussion. Texts will be distributed in Hebrew and English. In order to prepare materials in advance, registration is required for this course. Contact Mary, at 665-9897 or email rabbisoffice@tds.net by January 12, 2010, to sign up for the winter series. It is not necessary to have participated in the fall series to join this course. All classes begin at 7:30 p.m. with Maariv, the evening service. This class is faciliated by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. The dates of the class are January 19, 26, February 2, and February 9.

Sweatshirt Shabbat with Cholent Kiddush

This special Shabbat service and kiddush will take place on Saturday, December 5, with the service starting at 9:30 a.m. Participants may wear their favorite sweatshirt from camp, college, or travel while spending the morning in comfort. The reception following features a cholent sit-down kiddush with an internationally influenced array of hot and hearty cholents plus other foods, prepared by Beth Israel members and Nikki Klein, the Beth Israel kitchen coordinator. There is no charge for lunch.

Beth Israel Café

On Sunday mornings December 6 and January10 from 9:30 a.m.–noon, parents (both men and women) are invited to come into the large Social Hall for a few minutes or the entire morning for free coffee and bagels. They may use their lap tops (the entire synagogue is wireless) socialize or read. The cafe planned and sponsored by the Women's League.

Latkepalooza

Latkepalooza is a Chanukah celebration extravaganza for all ages on Sunday, December 13, starting at 5 p.m. There will be a latke bar for dinner, featuring both traditional potato pancakes as well as exotic latkes. There will be a community candle lighting ceremony, games, crafts and activities. Entertainment will also include musical performances.

The evening will conclude with a "Latke–Hamantash" debate in order to determine which form of Jewish cuisine is the most delicious and the most emblematic of the Jewish people. There is a charge and reservations are required. Contact programs@bethisrael-aa.org or call 769-1651.

Tot Chanukah Dinner

On Wednesday, December 16, the Tot Chanukah Dinner will take place at Beth Israel starting at 5:30 p.m. Children kindergarten-age and younger are invited to celebrate the sixth night of Chanukah with a latke dinner and dreidel games. There will also be arts and crafts, songs and stories to celebrate the holiday. Plus, all children will receive a small gift. Families are asked to bring a *Hanukkiah* from their home for the candle lighting ceremony. Reservations are required, and there is a charge.

Junior Congregation/Moadon and Kehillat Shabbat on Saturdays

Junior Congregation provides a Shabbat morning program for kids in first through fifth grade. It begins at 10 a.m. with Moadon, an opportunity for children to hang out and play games led by the high school Madrichim. At 11 a.m. there is a Shabbat service for children that offers a mixture of teaching and prayer, and a chance for the children to lead their own service. Junior Congregation will meet on Saturdays, December 5, 12, and 19, and January 9, 16, 23, and 30. The innovative "Kehilat Shabbat" provides an enriched educational program and service for first through fifth graders exploring themes from the Torah portion and Jewish teaching. Kehillat Shabbat is facilitated by Gabe Pachter and meets on Saturdays, December 12 and January 9

Saturday Morning Tot Shabbat

Tot Shabbat is held at 11:15 a.m. the second and fourth Saturday of most months for children through kindergarten and their families. Tot Shabbat is led on alternating weeks by Peretz Hirshbein and Jessica Kander, and features songs and stories in a special Shabbat celebration for the youngest members of our community. Tot Shabbat concludes with grape juice and challah and the saying of *kiddush* and *hamotzi*. Afterwards, the families are encouraged to join the regular Kiddush reception upstairs at a special tots table. Tot Shabbat will meet December 12, December 19, January 9, and January 23. There is no charge for this program.

Quiz Night

Beth Israel's third annual Quiz Night will take place on Saturday evening, January 16 at 7 p.m. People will compete in teams for fabulous prizes and to earn the coveted title of Quiz Night Champions. The competition includes multimedia trivia challenges, written puzzles, and friendly rivalries. There will be a dessert break midway through the competition. The cost is $10 for adults, and $5 for high school students.

Judaism 101: An Introduction and a Refresher

Judaism 101 is a continuing class meant for anyone who is looking to learn or review some of the fundamentals of Judaism. Four topics are still to be covered through the end of the course: Shabbat, Prayer, Conservative Judaism and Sacred Texts. Each topic will be explored for three weeks. Adults are welcome to sign up for one topic, a few topics, or all four topics. All classes begin at 7:30 p.m. with Maariv, the evening service, and are facilitated by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. Sessions on the subject of Shabbat will take place on December 2, 9, and 16. The session on Prayer will take place on January 13, 20, and 27. The session on Conservative Judaism will take place on March 10, 17, and 24. The sessions on Sacred Texts will take place on April 21, and 28, and May 5.

Overnight Homeless Shelter volunteers needed

Beth Israel Congregation will again participate in the Ann Arbor Shelter Association of Washtenaw County's rotating shelter program. From December 21–January 4, Beth Israel will host up to 25 overflow guests (each night) from the main shelter on 312 W. Huron. Three to four volunteers are needed each night, and two to three drivers are needed each morning and evening to drive the guests to and from Beth Israel.

The men permitted to participate in the program are free of serious substance or psychological issues. Online signup will be available through the Beth Israel website, ww.bethisrael-aa.org, or offline through Rebecca Kanner at 994-5717.

The Shelter Association serves the largest percentage of those experiencing homelessness in Washtenaw County: single adult men and women. All of the clients share two characteristics: they have no place to live, and they do not currently have the resources to secure and maintain housing. Many of the clients are unable to obtain housing on their own, because they are facing multiple barriers that impede their ability to do so.

The Shelter Association offers a variety of services and programs to help individuals who are experiencing homelessness. Services range from providing emergency shelter, referrals for substance abuse treatment, clothing vouchers, transportation, and food to providing health care, housing assistance, and money management.

Award winning author Eileen Pollack

On Sunday, January 10, 7:45–9:15 p.m. Eileen Pollack, Ph.D., will present "What We Don't Know about the People We Love Could Fill a Book" at Beth Israel as part of Beth Israel's Current Topics in Jewish Studies Series. There is no charge for this program, which includes refreshments.

Pollack was born and grew up in Liberty, New York, the heart of the Jewish Catskills, where her grandparents owned and operated a small hotel and her father was the town dentist. A graduate of Yale University with a bachelors of science degree in physics, Pollack later earned an masters of fine arts degree from the University of Iowa, where she was awarded a teaching-writing fellowship. She is the author of a collection of short fiction, *The Rabbi in the Attic And Other Stories*, a novel, *Paradise, New York*, and a work of creative nonfiction called *Woman Walking Ahead: In Search of Catherine Weldon and Sitting Bull,* which won a 2003 WILLA finalist award. Pollack's essays, articles, and reviews have appeared in many periodicals; her innovative textbook and anthology, *Creative Nonfiction: A Guide to Form, Content, and Style, with Readings*, was published in January 2009 by Wadsworth/Cengage. A new collection of stories and novellas called *In the Mouth* was

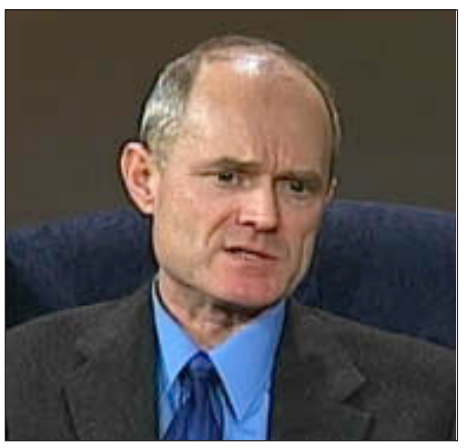
Eileen Pollack

published in 2008 by Four Way Books and was named the winner of the 2008 Edward Lewis Wallant Award, which is presented annually to an American writer whose published creative work of fiction is considered to have significance for the American Jew, in addition to being shortlisted for the Sophie Brody Medal for Jewish literature, being chosen as a finalist for the Paterson Fiction Award, and winning a silver medal in *ForeWord Magazine's* 2008 Book of the Year Awards.

Pollack has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Michener Foundation, the Rona Jaffe Foundation, and the Massachusetts Arts Council. Her stories have appeared in journals such as *Ploughshares, Prairie Schooner, Michigan Quarterly Review, SubTropics, Agni,* and *New England Review.* Her novella *The Bris* was chosen to appear in the *Best American Short Stories 2007* anthology, edited by Stephen King, while her stories have been awarded two Pushcart Prizes, the Cohen Award for best fiction of the year from *Ploughshares*, and similar awards from *Literary Review* and *MQR*. She lives in Ann Arbor and is the Zell Director of the MFA Program in Creative Writing at the University of Michigan.

Mayor Hieftje at Beth Israel

On Friday, January 22, after the Friday evening service that begins at 7:30 p.m.,



Mayor Hieftje

Ann Arbor Mayor John Hieftje will address the congregation at 8:30 p.m. Mayor Hieftje is the 60th mayor of Ann Arbor, and was elected in 2000.

The evening includes refreshments as part of the Oneg Shabbat. This is a part of the dynamic new Shabbat Take the Time series.

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Adult Hebrew Classes at Beth Israel

Beth Israel Congregation is offering 12-week Adult Hebrew classes this winter beginning the week of January 4, with various levels of difficulty. New students are asked to meet with the instructor to determine the best class for their backgrounds. There are five levels of conversational Hebrew and three levels of biblical Hebrew. There is one beginning Hebrew reading class in the afternoon. Contact Mary at Beth Israel to receive the full brochure mary@bethisrael-aa.org, or call 665-9897. Anyone in the community is welcome to join these classes. There is a tuition fee.

The classes are taught by two veteran Hebrew instructors, Malli Holoshitz and Pauli Weizman. Holoshitz is a native Israeli who has taught Hebrew for many years; she is noted for her lively and animated teaching style. She earned a Ph.D. in education from the University of Michigan, and teaches at the Frankel Jewish Academy of Metro Detroit. Holoshitz also teaches at the School of Education at Eastern Michigan University, as well as at the University of Michigan.

Weizman has been teaching Hebrew at the University of Michigan since 1987, and is the recipient of an "Excellence in Education" award by the Department of Near Eastern Studies. She is a native Israeli and has earned two masters degrees — one in Teaching English as a Second Language and the other in social work; she also has a bachelor's degree in Hebrew linguistics.

World Wide Wrap

On, Sunday, February 7, at 9:30 a.m., Beth Israel Men's Club will sponsor locally the "World Wide Wrap." This program is a project of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs and encourages Jews around the world to put on tefillin and pray together. Beth Israel will provide extra sets of *tefillin* and experienced *tefillin* teachers will be available to assist anyone (man or woman) who would like to participate in this important mitzvah.

Beth Israel is known for its post service Polar Bear Tefillin Photo that captures all the *tefillin*-clad participants in the out-of-doors, regardless of the weather.

Following the Shaharit service, participants will be served a brunch of bagels, lox, and coffee. Beth Israel's sixth grade Bar/Bat Mitzvah program and the seventh graders will join in the morning.

The Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs is an organization of approximately 270 Conservative/Masorti Jewish men's groups consisting of 25,000 individuals across North America and the world. The FJMC involves Jewish men in Jewish life by building and strengthening Men's Clubs in the Conservative/Masorti Movement.

General community is always welcome to events

All of Beth Israel's events, plus all educational offerings are open to the general community, often at no cost. For further information, call 665-9897 or visit www.bethisrael-aa.org.

Temple Beth Emeth Programs

Rabbi Lisa Delson, special to the WJN

Movie Tuesdays

December 8 and January 12 at 1 p.m.

Movie Tuesday is a free way to explore Judaism and Jewish culture through film and discussion for those with flexible schedules. In December, participants will watch *Trembling Before God*, a documentary that includes interviews and follows several gay and lesbian Orthodox Jews, and also interviews several rabbis and psychologists regarding their views on homosexuality in Orthodox Judaism. In January, participants will watch *The Lemon Tree*, an Israeli drama depicting the lives of Palestinians and Israelis and their struggle to come to grips with family history, political strife, the beauty of the land, and love. All movies are free and open to the public. Child care is available with advanced notice.

Tot Chanukah-Tot Shabbat—stories, music, crafts and latkes

Friday, December 18, at 5:30 p.m.

The Tot Shabbat Service for the last night of Chanukah will include lighting the menorah and special stories for Chanukah. After the service, all are invited to stay for the Tot Chanukah celebration with crafts, songs, and the normal tot Shabbat dinner ($5) that will include latkes. Reservations are encouraged to help with planning quantities, but are not necessary. To reserve, call the TBE office, at 665-4744.

Shabbat Chanukah service

Friday, December 18, at 7:30 p.m.

Celebrate Shabbat at TBE on this last night of Chanukah, and join in the tradition of lighting dozens of menorahs at the end of the service.

Renaissance Group activities

Temple Beth Emeth's Renaissance Group, for members ages 55 and up, meets monthly for social gatherings. On Saturday, December 12, at 7 p.m., the annual Chanukah Party potluck dinner and "white elephant" gift exchange will take place at the Chapel Hill Clubhouse. On January 9, the group will attend the opera, *Der Rosenkavalier*, in the series "LIVE at the MET" on the big screen at Quality 16 Theater. Tickets are $17.50 for seniors over age 62 and $22 for others. Contact Judith Rose or the TBE office, 665-4744, for details.

Music Man *at the Michigan Theater, December 25*

Continuing an annual tradition, TBE will bring the musical, *Music Man*, to the Michigan Theater the morning of December 25. This is more than just a morning at the movies. Doors open at 10 a.m. and bagels are available for breakfast. The movie begins at 10:30 a.m., and pauses for a lunch intermission when kosher hot dogs (and veggie dogs) are available for purchase. Door prizes, a sing-a-long, and a morning of community camaraderie are in store for everyone in attendance. Tickets are $7 per person, and are available in advance both in the TBE office and on line at www.templebethemeth.org.

Bible, Morality, and the 21st Century with Dr. Cobi Sacerdoti

Mondays, January 11, 25, and February 8, from 7:30–9 p.m.

TBE will host a three-part course on Bible, Morality, and the 21st Century. This course is an intellectual look and an emotional journey into the moral wisdom of the Bible where arrogance, pride, jealousy, love, and devotion impact human life. This class will discuss the way Jewish ancestors' moral faults and strengths can shape present day Jews and be a lesson in the 21st century. Dr. Sacerdoti will discuss three Bible stories; the Tower of Babel (how arrogance diminishes wisdom), The Twelve Spies (seek the truth, do not hide behind a lie), and Absolam's Rebellion (nobody can acquire honor by doing what is wrong).

Dr. Sacerdoti, an Israeli-born scholar, taught Hebrew language and literature at the University of Michigan and was the department head of Hebrew at the Frankel Academy of Metropolitan Detroit. She has published many books and articles on a wide range of Jewish topics as well as Israeli life.

Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Robert Levy

Fridays, January 8 through February 26, at noon

"Issues of Israel over Time and Space." Each week Rabbi Levy will lead a discussion on Israel as a hope, dream, fantasy, power, home, and destination through the lens of Israel as an eternal idea and also a modern nation state. Feel free to stop by for one or all of the sessions with a lunch.

Spirituality Book Club

Join Cantor Annie Rose as she leads a journey through nine books over nine months on the first Tuesday of each month, from 7:30–9 p.m.

The class is designed with everyone in mind: firm believers, non-believers, gentle skeptics, or interested seekers. December's book is *A New Earth,* by Eackhart Tolle. According to Tolle, humans are on the verge of creating a new world by a personal transformation that shifts one's attention away from one's ever-expanding ego. Naturally, the author understands his material so thoroughly that he is able to convey it in an enjoyable manner, but Tolle's gentle tone and dialect begs his audience's attention simply through its straightforward approach.

January's selection is *Kitchen Table Wisdom* by Rachel Remen. Remen has a unique perspective on healing rooted in her background as a physician, a professor of medicine, a therapist, and a long-term survivor of chronic illness. In a deeply moving and down-to earth collection of true stories, this prominent physician shows life in all its power and mystery, and reminds the reader that the things one cannot measure may be the things that ultimately sustain and enrich one's life.

The book club is free to join, with the exception of the cost of the books. Books are available on amazon.com or through other booksellers. Sign up for the book club by emailing Cantor Annie Rose at cantorannie@gmail.com.

Mourning and Mitzvah

This course, offered Thursdays in January at 7:30 p.m., provides an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of Jewish mourning customs and practice through reading, discussion and writing. It is designed for those who have experienced loss as well as those seeking knowledge and insight into this important aspect of Jewish life. The course is free, but there is a charge for the textbook.

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah's Simchat Torah
Brayan Zivan studies the Torah, part of the Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah's Simchat Torah celebration, which took place at its annual retreat. Havurah member Debbie Field looks on, as she helps hold up the scroll.

Crime, plus politics, propelling Jews out of Venezuela

By Jasmina Kelemen

CARACAS, Venezuela (JTA)—Esther Benchimol de Roffe arrived in Venezuela as a young bride, leaving northern Morocco more than 50 years ago to meet her groom in a prosperous foreign land.

The young couple fit in easily in a country where, as Spanish-speaking Sephardim, they already were familiar with the language and the Jewish community was established. Her husband built a successful business, and Benchimol raised a family and earned international renown singing the ancient Sephardic hymns she had learned as a child in Alcazarquivir.

"It was a rich country, there were a lot of opportunities," reminisces Benchimol, now 74. "We had many friends and there was a real sense of brotherhood. There was never any racism against us."

Her tone changes, however, when she considers the futures of her grandchildren and whether she would advise them to stay in Venezuela.

"I wouldn't stay here," Benchimol said. "I'm speaking as a grandmother."

It's not anti-Semitism that causes her to fear daily for the safety of her grandchildren but "la inseguridad"—insecurity. It's the general term Venezuelans use now to describe an unrelenting crime wave that cuts across the country's economically and ideologically polarized society. The issue consistently tops surveys here as Venezuelans' biggest concern.

Venezuelan Jews say that as citizens of a state in which many have lost faith in the police and judicial system, they fear random violence far more than anti-Semitic attacks. They consistently cite crime as their main source of anxiety.

Last year, Foreign Policy magazine called Caracas the murder capital of the world, tallying the homicide rate at 130 per 100,000 residents. Official statistics are hard to come by because the government has stopped providing details.

In order to gauge crime, journalists rely on the city morgue in Caracas to report how many bodies arrived over the weekend as the result of violence, publishing their tally in newspapers on Monday mornings. In one wave of weekend violence in early October, 56 people were reported murdered in this city of just over 4 million people.

It's not anti-Semitism that causes her to fear daily for the safety of her grandchildren but "la inseguridad"—insecurity.

In addition to murder, kidnappings for ransom—a source of high anxiety for the city's wealthier inhabitants—are said to be on the rise. Jews say they feel at particular risk due to the perception that the Jewish community can pony up a large ransom for a kidnapped Jew.

Yair Rosemberg, a 28-year old theater producer, is less than a month away from getting married. Where crime was once regarded as something he read about in the papers, now it has touched a growing number of his acquaintances, he said.

He and his fiancee probably will move to Israel after they are married; the couple recently returned from a trip there to explore their options. Rosemberg cited it as his main reason for wanting to leave.

That fear, combined with President Hugo Chavez's verbal broadsides against Israel and still fresh memories of a shocking assault last January against the community's main synagogue, Tiferet Israel, is prompting many Jews here to consider whether there is a future for them in Venezuela. Over the past decade, the Jewish community has fallen from a high of about 20,000 members to the oft-cited figures of 13,000 to 10,000, according to local Jewish activists.

Throughout his decade in power, Chavez has referred to the United States as imperialist and belligerent. Following Israel's incursion into Gaza last winter, Chavez severed diplomatic ties with Israel and ratcheted up his rhetoric against the Jewish state. He refers to Israel as a genocidal state. Once he referred disparagingly to Colombia as the region's "Israel" while voicing his displeasure at an agreement to allow the U.S. military access to Colombia's military bases.

Meanwhile, he's built friendships with and welcomed the presidents of Iran and Libya, part of what he has described as his efforts to build a counterweight to U.S. "hegemony."

Venezuelan Jews say there is a wide gap between the president's anti-Israel rhetoric and the attitudes of the Venezuelan people toward Jews. Venezuela has not seen the anti-Semitism that exists in some other Latin American countries.

"I would rather be a Jew here than in Spain," said Paulina Gamus, a local political commentator and outspoken critic of Chavez, responding to a question about whether Venezuela is still safe for Jews.

"There, anti-Semitism is among the people. Here, with all of the government's hostility, the people aren't hostile." she adds. "There isn't a personal sense of anti-Semitism."

Gamus is the only Jew to have served in Venezuela's National Assembly.

While Gamus insists that her home is in Venezuela, the younger generation of her family has mostly left the country. All of her children, nieces and nephews live abroad to escape the security situation, she said.

While not explicitly anti-Semitic, local Jews fear Chavez's constant barrage of anti-Israeli discourse could breed hostility towards their community, adding another layer of stress in a city where many citizens already feel helpless coping with one of the highest murder rates in the world.

"There's a lot of fear that there could be an attack against the community," said Camila Roffe de Levy, a 51-year old biologist in Caracas and Benchimol's daughter.

"No one has attacked us," she explained. "It's not the people, nor your neighbor nor the guy who lives down the street from you. But what scares us is this anti-Israeli discourse that could be wrongly interpreted by people who don't know any better."

A lawyer who divides her time between Miami and Caracas says there is a general breakdown of trust toward the government, which she feels both as a Venezuelan citizen and even more so as a Jew.

She requested anonymity due to her work promoting human rights in Venezuela.

Since the synagogue attack last January, authorities have stepped up protection at Jewish houses of prayer. Many said they were pleased with the security provided during Yom Kippur.

But that day, while many Jews were in synagogue, Chavez praised Libyan President Muammar Gadhafi and invited him to speak on national television in a ceremony that all of the nation's public channels were forced to broadcast.

"With this man [Chavez] you just never know," said Benchimol. "It's not something you can understand. It's unpredictable." ■

Vienna's Jews look to immigration to boost declining numbers

By Ben Harris

VIENNA (JTA)—From a shelf in his office, Ariel Muzicant extracts a weathered copy of a May 1985 community newsletter whose cover sports a graph depicting the Jewish population of Vienna nosediving.

From its postwar peak of about 9,000 in the early 1960s, the graph projected the Jewish population dipping below 5,000 by the turn of the millennium.

Nearly a quarter-century after that dire prediction, the worst has been avoided: The number of registered community members in Vienna stands at about 7,500 and, according to Muzicant, the community president, it is "technically growing."

But leaders of the Viennese Jewish community, Muzicant among them, again are warning of disaster unless the community increases its ranks. And the consensus on how to do it can be summed up in a single word: immigration.

"We need people," said Ilan Knapp, principal of a Jewish vocational high school in Vienna and the head of a communal commission working to bring Jewish immigrants to Vienna from the former Soviet Union. "The only possibility is to bring Jews from this area."

Over the past two decades, Jewish communities in Western Europe whittled down by intermarriage and assimilation have sustained themselves with immigration by Jews from the East, where communism had left Jews trapped until the fall of the Iron Curtain. The largest pool of potential immigrants, from the former Soviet Union, have been migrating West in significant numbers since the fall of communism.

Skeptics in Vienna say it's a mistake to pin the community's future on the hope that more Russian-speaking immigrants will arrive here.

"Those who wanted to come, came," said Rabbi Nechemia Rotenberg, the religious principal of a Jewish high school in Vienna who also works on continuity issues as the director of Zehut ("Identity").

Current projections show the total population of Austrian Jews declining by half in the next 10 to 30 years—a prediction that appears to vary largely on the degree of pessimism of those making it. Vienna's substantial Jewish infrastructure—four schools, more than a dozen synagogues and an array of Jewish welfare agencies—are in danger if the community cannot amass a larger pool of members to support it. Knapp pegs the target at about 25,000.

"Communities which today are below 10,000 don't have the critical mass to survive," Muzicant said, noting that perhaps a third of European Jewish communities are in a situation similar to Vienna's and are in danger of disappearing.

In trying to draw more Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union, Austria's Jews are looking with both envy and trepidation at Germany, their neighbor to the north. Some 120,000 Jewish immigrants from the former Soviet Union have transformed German Jewry and, by some accounts, saved it from oblivion.

Knapp, whose school, Jüdisches Berufliches Bildungszentrum, helps train and assimilate Viennese Jews into the Austrian job market, is confident the community can absorb a large influx more successfully than Germany did.

"They have the people but not the institutions," Knapp said. "We have the institutions but not the people."

Neither Muzicant's diagnosis nor his solution are universally accepted in Vienna.

Rotenberg says the community is mistaken to pin its hopes on a significant Russian-speaking immigration. The few Jews that are coming to Vienna, he says, are from smaller communities with fewer religious options, such as Germany. He concedes the number is quite modest but says it could be increased.

Yvonne Feiger, 28, the director of the Jewish Salons chapter in Vienna and a member of the community board, said the idea of immigration to save Austrian Jewry is absurd. Instead, the community should focus its resources on the Jews who already live here and, she believes, are not well served by existing community institutions.

"They're not very good at finding creative answers instead of just saying what is bad," Feiger said.

Muzicant, a real estate executive with a somewhat fearsome reputation, is unlikely to be dissuaded by such views.

During an interview with JTA in his office in the city center, Muzicant cited the many times during his long communal career in which his ideas were dismissed as pipe dreams only to be eventually realized.

"Part of my success is not genius," he said with the faintest glint in his eye. "It's being stubborn." ■

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK: 20 YEARS AGO

The change has come to Jewish life in Eastern Europe

By Ruth Ellen Gruber

ROME (JTA)—Covering the development of Jewish life in Europe in the 20 years since the fall of communism, I have witnessed many landmark moments.

Among them are many "firsts"—the first rabbis to take up their posts, the first bar mitzvahs and Jewish weddings in decades, the first new synagogues, the first kosher restaurants, the first Jewish schools, etc.

There were also the first conflicts between Reform and Orthodox, between young generations and the establishment, between rival Jewish factions struggling for communal power.

Sometimes the symbolism was overwhelming: Jewish life and free expression of Jewish identity were re-emerging in the one-time Jewish heartland, in countries whose Jewish populations had been decimated by the Holocaust and where a Jewish presence was long considered a closed chapter of history.

In July 1995, a conference was held in Prague to plan strategy for the future of Jews in Europe.

The image it often conjured up for me was of fragile tendrils emerging through ashes.

Over time the tendrils took hold. The new life they represent is still delicate and still needs a lot of nurturing—financial and otherwise. Eastern Europe's emerging Jewish communities face internal and external challenges, and it's doubtful that many of the tiny far-flung communities ultimately will survive.

But Eastern European Jewish life generally is here to stay. That was not at all apparent before the collapse of the Iron Curtain.

In Warsaw in the early 1980s, when I first met the Jewish author and journalist Konstanty Gebert, the sense was that there was no future for Jews in Eastern Europe.

"I believe we are the last ones. Definitely," Gebert told an interviewer.

Recently, however, Gerbert heralded Polish Jewish life, present and future.

"There is a bar mitzvah in my shul next week. The yearly Festival of Jewish Culture in Krakow is just around the corner. *Midrasz*, the Jewish magazine, comes to my mailbox regularly late, as always," he wrote in a recently published essay. "My younger son graduated from the city's Jewish school. My older son was press spokesman of the Warsaw kehilla for some time. My invitation for the Israeli Independence Day reception just came in."

In Prague, where the affiliated Jewish community numbers at least 1,600 and the various Jewish denominations have five active synagogues, I remember the intensity of emotion at a 1992 ceremony when Karol Sidon, a writer and one-time anti-communist dissident, was inaugurated formally as the city's rabbi.

It was the eve of Rosh Hashanah, and a standing-room crowd filled the opulent sanctuary of the ornate Jubilee Synagogue.

"All my life I've been moving in a circle toward the inauguration," Sidon had told me a few days earlier. "People do things unconsciously; they don't always consciously decide what to do. Their subconscious leads them to it."

Sidon was born in 1942 to a Jewish father who died in the Terezin concentration camp and a gentile mother who survived the war. As an adult, Sidon formally converted and escaped to Germany, where he studied Judaism in the 1980s before completing his rabbinical studies in Israel.

Sidon, who is Orthodox, is still Prague's chief rabbi, though he was ousted briefly in 2005 during bitter infighting between Jewish community factions.

"I remember when all of us would be hiding in one synagogue and leaving in a way that no one would spot us," said Peter Gyori, deputy chair of the Federation of Czech Jewish Communities and also head of the non-Orthodox Beit Praha, recalling the bad old days when almost anything Jewish was suppressed or suspect.

"We live now in the luxury of 'fighting' among various communities and groups," he said, "and not going to this or that synagogue."

In July 1995, Prague was the scene of another first—the first conference since the Holocaust that was dedicated to planning strategy for the future of Jews in Europe. It may seem odd to single out a conference as one of the key moments of Jewish development in post-communist Europe. But this one, called "Planning for the Future of European Jewry," was in fact a landmark.

The three-day meeting aimed to assert, for the first time, "that Jews in Europe can take the future into their own hands, an attitude inconceivable before 1989."

It drew 200 Jewish community leaders, policymakers and scholars from 25 countries across Europe, East and West, as well as the United States and Israel.

Participants included Orthodox and secular Jews, rabbis and laypeople. Many, meeting for the first time, forged networks that persist to this day.

The meeting was the first international forum to identify and outline many of the issues that have since dominated the European Jewish policy agenda: relations between Diaspora Jews and Israel; how to define Jewish identity and what constitutes a Jewish community; anti-Semitism and interfaith activities; the relationship of Jews to Europe; how to reach out to the unaffiliated.

Speaking to the meeting, Gebert described the Jews of post-communist Europe as "shipwrecked Jews" who were struggling to reclaim a Jewish identity that had been submerged under communism, and in many cases did not know which way to turn.

The conference was an exciting moment—the first formal occasion in which the concept of a post-communist, pan-European identity was broached.

As such it reflected the energy and optimism that exploded after the fall of communism and led many observers to dub the 1990s "the Jewish decade."

Czech President Vaclav Havel, whose first foreign trip after becoming president in 1989 was to Israel, met with participants.

"I believe Jews will continue to live a life of their own," he said, "and that new generations will emerge." ■

What the use of Yiddish phrases can tell us about contemporary American Jewry

By Marissa Brostoff

NEW YORK (Tablet)—The results are in: the words "shpiel" and "klutz" have been thoroughly absorbed into the American vernacular, while "mensch" and "kvetch" remain primarily in the linguistic domain of Jews. A third of Jewish Americans who did not grow up in New York have nonetheless been told that they sound like they're from that city. Sixty-eight percent of Reform Jews pronounce the word for the annual Jewish harvest festival "soo-COAT," as Israelis do, while only 34 percent use the Yiddish pronunciation "SUK-kiss"; among the fervently Orthodox, those numbers are basically reversed. And gay non-Jews use more Yiddish than straight non-Jews, though gay Jews and straight Jews use about the same amount.

These are just a few findings of the Survey of American Jewish Language and Identity, the results of which were published online late last month by linguist Sarah Bunin Benor and sociologist Steven M. Cohen. Dozens of surveys about American Jews have come out the past few decades—but this is a rare one that shows rather than tells. Instead of asking respondents how religious they are or whether their grandchildren will be Jewish, Benor and Cohen asked questions like, "When you say 'Mary' and 'merry' in regular speech, do they sound the same or different?" and "How do you refer to the Jewish skullcap?" By hitting the question of Jewish identity at a slant rather than head-on, the researchers have come up with an unusually nuanced portrait of contemporary American Jews.

"Patterns of language use can tell us things about identities and communities that might not even be known to the actors themselves," said Cohen, who has been conducting Jewish identity surveys of the more direct variety for some four decades. "There are things we can see through the side door that we can't see through the front door."

Benor and Cohen's survey technique, like the questions they asked, was untraditional. Instead of using a random survey sample, they employed a "snowball technique," e-mailing the survey to 600 friends in July 2008 and asking respondents to forward it in turn. They make clear in the introduction to their report that this approach has both its advantages and its drawbacks. On the one hand, 41,696 people completed the survey just in the first few weeks of its life on the Internet. (You can still take the survey online, though only data from those first 41,696 respondents has already been analyzed.) By contrast, the National Jewish Population Survey, conducted every 10 years by Jewish Federations of North America, has a sample size of about 5,000. On the other hand, Benor and Cohen acknowledge, "We know it over-represents Jews with strong Jewish engagement and social ties"—the kind of people most likely to take such a survey of their own volition.

As Benor expected from her previous scholarship (like Cohen, she teaches at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, the Reform movement's seminary, which sponsored the survey), the data suggests that for the most part, American Jews across the religious spectrum draw from the same "repertoire" of distinctive speech elements—that is, they are English speakers who use varying amounts of Yiddish or Hebrew phrasing and grammar to distinguish themselves both from non-Jews and from Jews elsewhere on the spectrum. With the exception of those fervently Orthodox Jews who use Yiddish as their primary language, Benor said, American Jews fall somewhere on this "continuum of distinctiveness" rather than being separable into different dialect groups.

"My favorite example is 'gmar cha-tee-MAH to-VAH,'" she said, enunciating each syllable of the traditional Yom Kippur greeting: in English, "May you be inscribed in the book of life." "That's the most modern Hebrew pronunciation you can get. Then there's 'gmar cha-TEE-mah TO-vah,' 'gmar cha-SEE-mah TO-vah,' and then 'gmar ch'SEE-mah TOY-vah."

For those in the know, each pronunciation signifies a different spot on the religious continuum: a non-Orthodox Jew probably would use the modern Hebrew pronunciation; as you move along the spectrum of observance, the greeting becomes more Yiddish-inflected.

One of the key findings of the survey was what Benor and Cohen call "the growth of linguistic distinctiveness among the Orthodox." Distinctive strains of Yiddish-inflected English are not only still in everyday use among younger generations of Orthodox American Jews, their prevalence is growing. Take the phrase, "She's staying by us," which borrows a Yiddish grammatical construction to mean, "She's staying at our place." Fifty-three percent of Orthodox Jews who took the survey use the phrase (versus 21 percent of non-Orthodox Jews). But a full three quarters of Orthodox Jews between the ages of 18 and 24 use it, compared to 12 percent of Orthodox respondents 75 or older. According to the report, "such words and phrases are so important for Orthodox identity that many *baalei teshuva* (newly Orthodox Jews) make a conscious effort to incorporate them into their speech, even when some people consider them to be incorrect English." Observant Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews, whose ancestors never spoke Yiddish in the first place, have adopted Yiddish religious terminology as well.

Benor attributes this to the fact that Orthodox communities have in general become more conservative, politically and culturally, in recent years. "Part of that shift to the right is a linguistic shift: some Jews who used to use less distinct English are now incorporating more Yiddishisms into their English," she said.

In non-Orthodox Jewish communities, two trends are happening concurrently, the survey found: As members of an older generation die and takes certain language patterns with them, younger Jews are using more Yiddish and Hebrew than before (and certainly more than their more assimilationist parents' generation did). But the words disappearing and those reappearing aren't necessarily the same words. Though Jews (and non-Jews) of all ages still say "*shmutz*" and "*mazel tov,*" seniors are more likely than their grandchildren to use Yiddishisms like "*heimish*" (homey), "*macher*" (big shot), "*nu?*" (so?), "*naches*" (pride), and "*bashert*" (predestined). Where the younger generation is overtaking their grandparents is with religious terminology—Yiddish words like "*shul,*" "*daven*" and "*bentch*" (for the blessing after meals).

"You see more Jews now identifying as a religious rather than as an ethnic group," Benor said. "Those Yiddish words that are

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Jewish support for Israeli-Arab causes goes mainstream, irking some

By Gil Shefler

NEW YORK (JTA)—When the Reform movement passed a resolution endorsing advocacy for Israeli Arabs, it wasn't the first time an American Jewish group had backed the cause of Israeli-Arab equality.

In recent years, a growing number of American Jews have thrown their support toward Israeli-Arab causes, including civil rights and advocacy organizations, women's empowerment courses, student-exchange programs and even film festivals.

More than 80 Jewish groups belong to the Inter-Agency Task Force on Israeli-Arab Issues, which works on behalf of equal treatment of Israeli Arabs and Jews.

The Jewish federations' Venture Fund for Jewish and Arab Equality and Shared Society, a mix of 21 private family foundations, federations and philanthropists, has raised more than $1 million for Israeli-Arab causes since its launch in 2007. And in 2006, the Jewish Agency for Israel announced it would invest in projects benefiting Israeli Arabs, scrapping a policy, in place since its founding in 1922, of exclusively helping Jewish causes.

Last week's unanimous endorsement of the cause by American Jewry's largest religious movement, at the biennial conference in Toronto of the Union for Reform Judaism, was the latest sign that Jewish support for Israeli-Arab causes has gone mainstream.

"There's no doubt that more money has been given to this issue then ever before. It's become a mainstream issue," said Rabbi Brian Lurie, co-chair of the Inter-Agency Task Force, a former CEO of the Jewish federation of San Francisco and one of the key Jewish activists raising money in the Diaspora for Israeli Arabs. "Whether your mind-set is equality, whether it's the security of Israel, whether it's building bridges, all three reasons are involved and these are compelling reasons."

Arab citizens constitute approximately 20 percent of Israel's population of 7 million. Though they have the same rights accorded Israel's Jewish citizens, studies have shown that Israeli Arabs routinely suffer from employment discrimination and receive fewer government funds than Israel's Jewish sector in such areas as education, infrastructure and welfare.

In 2006, an Israeli government committee set up to investigate riots in October 2000, in which Israeli police fire left 12 Arab protesters dead, determined that Israel long had neglected its Arab citizens. The Or Commission finding helped pave the way for mainstream Jewish groups to support a cause long championed by organizations such as the New Israel Fund and the Abraham Project.

Not everyone is happy about it.

Morton Klein, president of the Zionist Organization of America, says American Jews should not be sending funds to an Israeli community that is disloyal toward Israel. He cited visits by Israeli-Arab lawmakers to enemy states such as Syria by way of example.

"I think it's a mistake to be raising money for Israeli Arabs, at least until they show their support for Israel and its rights," Klein said. "There's been an inverse relationship between the monies being allocated to the Israeli-Arab communities and their loyalties and commitment to Israel."

The New Israel Fund, for example, has come under fire for its support of Israeli-Arab advocacy groups that take controversial positions, including calls for eliminating Israel's Jewish character. Just last week, three NIF-funded Arab Israeli groups were behind a poster for a conference on women's rights in the Arab world that suggested Israeli soldiers sexually violate Palestinian women, prompting critics to cry foul.

The NIF defended its position even as it criticized the poster. "While we certainly defend the conference as appropriate—and as always, may disagree with our grantees on some key issues but see no reason to force them into ideological lockstep—there's no question that the poster in question is unnecessarily provocative and misleading," NIF communications director Naomi Paiss told JTA.

Other Jewish organizational officials say the Israeli-Arab community needs to be held to account. "We need to hold the leaders of the Israeli-Arab community or any other community to be responsible," said Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice chairman of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish American Organizations, which is a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force. "That means that when there are incitements or actions that are detrimental, they need to counter it."

Warning that some of the money donated with the intent of bolstering Israeli society by reaching out to Israeli Arabs is used for "questionable purposes," Hoenlein said donations by Diaspora Jews should be put to use effectively "to counter the Islamist forces, encourage moderation and create conditions that are inductive to it."

American Jews who support funding Israeli-Arab causes say they do so out of concern for Israel's democracy and Jewish values.

"Israel's strength and survival depend on the democratic nature of the Jewish state," said the Reform movement's resolution on the issue. "These imperatives require that we be ever sensitive to the aspirations and just demands of Israel's minority citizens."

Jessica Balaban, the executive director of the Inter-Agency Task Force, says her mission transcends political and ideological boundaries.

"With better education, people understand that improving the quality of life for the Arab citizens of Israel is not only a moral imperative but also in our self-interest, and it's been well received by the Arab community here," she told JTA by phone from Israel.

Rabbi Pesach Lerner, vice president of the National Council of Young Israel, an umbrella organization for Orthodox synagogues, said he objects to funding Israeli-Arab causes as a matter of priorities. "Tradition teaches us priorities, and those priorities dictate that we give to our own families first," Lerner said. "Jews in Israel have needs, and you don't see the Arabs giving money to the Jews."

Rabbi David Ellenson, president of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, subscribes to an opposing theological view. Quoting the biblical injunction to "welcome the stranger in your midst," Ellenson says it's a religious imperative—and eventually it will strengthen Israel.

"In general," he said, "I think that people who are treated with respect and dignity tend to respond to those who treat them this way." ■

Plans for new Palestinian city in West Bank raise hopes

By Dina Kraft

RAWABI, West Bank (JTA)—Dusk has fallen on a terraced hillside and workers clearing the red earth hurry to finish planting trees in the twilight, their labor the initial step in the construction of the first-ever planned Palestinian city.

The city, with a construction price tag of some $350 million, already has its city limits registered, a name—Rawabi, Arabic for hills—and funding from the government of Qatar. It's located about five miles north of Ramallah.

The project's Ramallah-based developers, who plan to start building soon, hail the project as a prized and much-needed example of Palestinian economic development. Israeli officials are among those citing it as a symbol of Palestinian progress.

"At the heart of this, it's about building a nation," says Bashar Masri, chairman of the board of the Bayti Real Estate Investment Company, which is running the project. "We have dreamed about a liberal, advanced state with a higher standard of living, and this project is part of those aspirations."

Masri, 48, sits behind a sleek, lime-colored glass desk at his office. He envisions the city as a place of both good living and employment. He talks animatedly about the work opportunities not only in construction but at a commercial center.

Eventually, Masri says, Rawabi will have schools, a hotel, a shopping center, health clinics—and up to 40,000 residents.

The sunny plans for Rawabi, despite lingering bureaucratic challenges with the Israeli and Palestinian authorities, dovetail with an increasingly positive picture of economic growth in the West Bank, economists say.

In Ramallah, the most prosperous Palestinian city and its financial hub, high-end restaurants are crowded, a new chain of cafes recently opened, billboards advertise top-of-the-line washing machines and cranes building high-rise buildings dot the hilltops. One building under construction will even feature a rotating rooftop restaurant.

How the unstable Palestinian political situation will impact that growth is unclear.

For the time being, International Monetary Fund officials say economic growth in the West Bank could reach as much as 7 percent in 2009 if Israel continues to relax restrictions, notably the removal of roadblocks. Such growth would indicate a major improvement in living standards in the area in the past three years, although the economy has yet to recover to pre-intifada levels from the summer of 2000. Unemployment in the West Bank is 18 percent, down from 25 percent in 2004.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu likes to tout Palestinian economic prosperity in the West Bank paving the way for political peace. Since coming to office in March, Netanyahu has removed a series of checkpoints, helping ease the movement of people and goods between West Bank towns and cities.

By contrast, Hamas-controlled Gaza remains largely blockaded by both Israel and Egypt, its economy in shambles.

Palestinians say that while some relief has come with the dismantling of checkpoints, the ones that remain—including makeshift ones that move daily—contribute to a fragile situation. Economic growth is not a substitute for political progress, they say.

"Economic progress helps and is desperately needed to make peace dividends stick, but you cannot ensure economic stability without political progress," Masri says. "Political instability can always blow up in our faces."

In 1995, inspired by the prospects for peace following the signing of the Oslo accords, Masri returned to the West Bank after years living in the United States. When the second intifada began in 2000, the road outside his office was often crowded with Israeli tanks and army jeeps. His offices are in the same neighborhood as the Mukata, the Palestinian Authority headquarters where Yasser Arafat spent time under siege.

Envisioning a different future, Adi Ashkenazi, who directs the economic research division of Israel's Office of Regional Cooperation under Minister Silvan Shalom, says Israel is supportive of the plans for Rawabi."Israel views with great importance assisting economic projects in the Palestinian Authority," Ashkenazi said. "We believe economic peace will improve our relations and help bring us to a place of dialogue and the real basis for future."

Ashkenazi talked to JTA while en route to a ceremony to mark a new Israel-West Bank crossing point that will make it easier for Israeli Arabs to enter the northern West Bank city of Jenin and spend money in the hopes that it will boost the local economy. Israeli Jews are not permitted to enter Palestinian cities.

Rawabi is to sit on Palestinian Authority-controlled land, but developers are still awaiting final Israeli approval for the building of an access road, part of which will cut near a road used by Jewish settlers that falls in an area under Israeli jurisdiction.

Palestinian economist Samir Hazboun sees the plans for Rawabi, which aims to attract educated, middle-class Palestinians, as a good sign.

"It show Palestinians interest in investing and improving their own standard of living and at the end of the day will be a new example that something is moving towards the future," Hazboun said.

Rawabi was heralded at a conference last month in Jerusalem by British Jewish businessman Sir Ronald Cohen, who heads a nonprofit that encourages political stability through Israeli and Palestinian economic development. The group, the Portland Trust, is helping support Rawabi.

Cohen says he sees the city as part of a larger effort to foster a more moderate Palestinian electorate. "We have to support private sector because it's the only way to have sustainable growth," Cohen said. "If people are feeling desperate, it's very hard to arrive at reasonable negotiations."

In Rawabi's promotional video, 3-D architectural images depict people walking in a modern city with gleaming high-rise buildings, green parks and shopping areas. For now, the site of Rawabi remains one of wild sage tucked amid craggy white rocks, rows of new cypress and pine trees, and a bumpy dirt road.

A young civil engineer who is part of its design team looks out at the view and says he hopes one day soon he'll be beyond planning the city; he'll be living in it. ■

Dec/Jan Events

131st Season ums 0910

Jean-Yves Thibaudet piano

Sat, Dec 12 | 8 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

"Every note he fashions as a pearl…the joy, brilliance, and musicality of his performance could not be missed." (*The New York Times*) A master of color, nuance, and interpretation, pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet is recognized for his sophisticated performances and poetic soul. Considered one of the great pianists of our time, he has been praised by the press as "a musical treasure of this age." His absolute artistry, virtuosity, and charisma will be on display in Hill Auditorium just a few days before his Carnegie Hall recital.

PROGRAM

Ravel	Pavane pour une enfante defunte (1899)
Ravel	Miroirs (1904-05)
Brahms	Sonata No. 3 in f minor, Op. 5 (1853)

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MEDIA PARTNER **WGTE 91.3 FM.**

Souad Massi

Fri, Jan 8 | 8 PM
MICHIGAN THEATER

Algerian singer/songwriter/guitarist Souad Massi began her career fronting the Algerian rock band Atakor, which was influenced by Led Zeppelin and U2. Her music, which prominently features the acoustic guitar, now displays Western musical influences such as rock, country, and Portugese fado, but also incorporates oriental musical influences and instruments such as the oud. She performs in many languages, including Algerian-Arabic, French, English, and Berber dialects, even within the same song. Her three solo albums delve into the personal rather than the political, expanding on themes of love and loss.

FUNDED IN PART BY THE **COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN.**
MEDIA PARTNERS **METRO TIMES AND MICHIGAN CHRONICLE.**

Fondly Do We Hope…Fervently Do We Pray
Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company

Bill T. Jones artistic director

Fri-Sat, Jan 22-23 | 8 PM
POWER CENTER

Choreographer Bill T. Jones commemorates the Abraham Lincoln bicentennial with a production exploring the life and legacy of this nation's complex figure. This dance-theater work features sophisticated movement set against a backdrop of film and a modern set, all accompanied by original live music for cello, guitar, piano and voice. The phrase taken from Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address to title the work, *Fondly Do We Hope…Fervently Do We Pray*, captures the vision of the piece: an examination of what Lincoln and his time mean today, and our hopes for the future.

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MEDIA PARTNERS **BETWEEN THE LINES, METRO TIMES, MICHIGAN RADIO 91.7 FM, ANN ARBOR'S 107ONE** AND **MICHIGAN CHRONICLE.**

Opera in Concert: *Bartók's Bluebeard's Castle*
Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Pierre Boulez artistic director
Mathieu Dufour flute
Michelle DeYoung mezzo-soprano
Falk Struckmann bass-baritone

Wed, Jan 27 | 8 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra and conductor emeritus Pierre Boulez perform a stunning program that includes a rare concert performance of Bartók's one-act opera, *Bluebeard's Castle*, in which the lovely Judith opens the seven doors in her new husband's castle, discovering something horrible and terrifying behind each. The program is balanced by Ravel's delightful Le Tombeau de Couperin and a new flute concerto by Marc-André Delbavie.

SPONSORED BY **THE LINDA AND MAURICE BINKOW PHILANTHROPIC FUND AND THE CHARLES H. GERSHENSON TRUST,** AND **AN ANONYMOUS DONOR.**
MEDIA PARTNER **WGTE 91.3 FM.**

Ladysmith Black Mambazo

Sun, Jan 31 | 4 PM
HILL AUDITORIUM

Since Paul Simon's *Graceland* catapulted Ladysmith Black Mambazo to worldwide fame in 1986, the vocal group has remained true to the idea of opening doors to South African culture through music. For more than 30 years, the group has married the intricate rhythms and harmonies of their native South African musical traditions to the sounds and sentiments of gospel music. The result is a musical and spiritual alchemy that has touched a worldwide audience representing every corner of the religious, cultural, and ethnic landscape.

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MEDIA PARTNERS **WEMU 89.1 FM, ANN ARBOR'S 107ONE, METRO TIMES, MICHIGAN CHRONICLE,** AND **BETWEEN THE LINES.**

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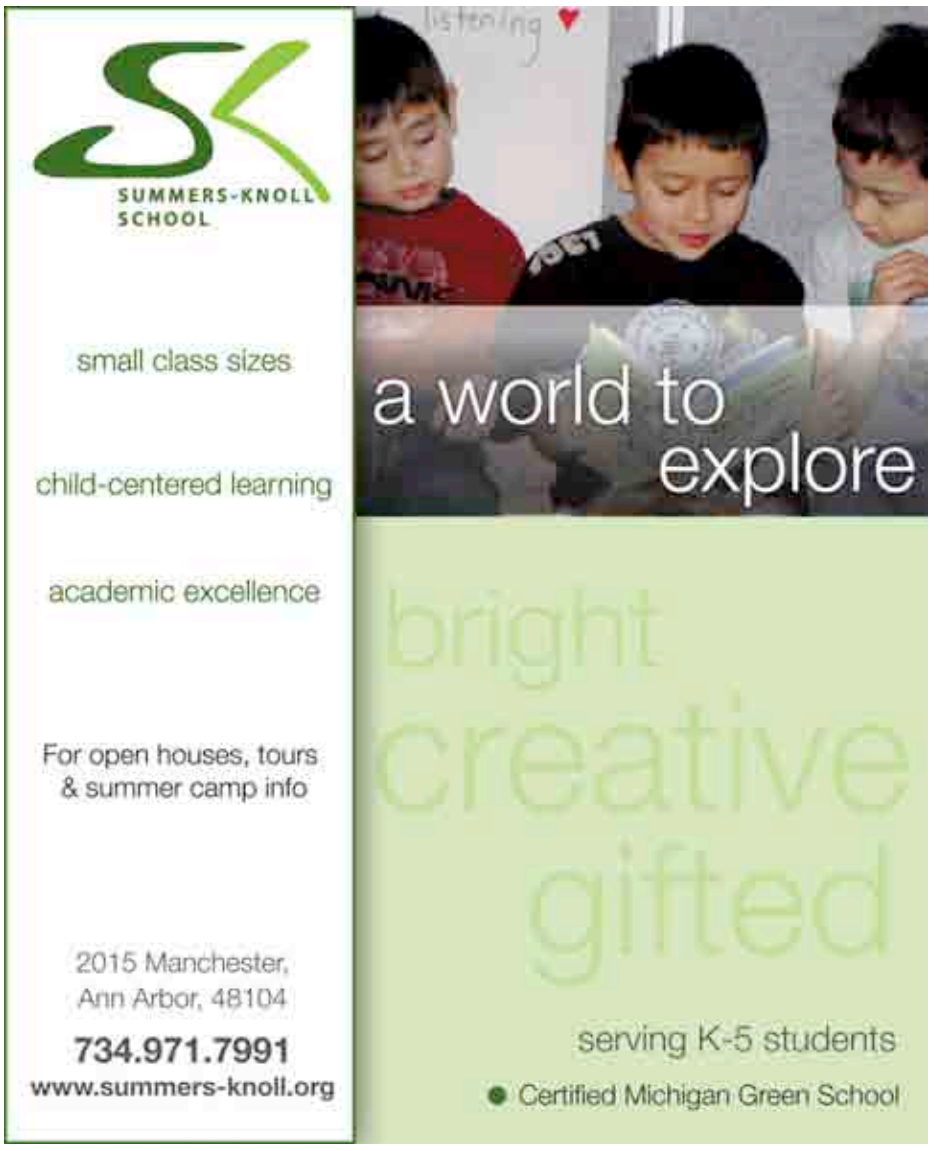

Body piercing—kosher or not?

Noa Gutterman, staff writer

Recently, I've wondered, is God's nose pierced? I know practically nothing about God, so why not? Who's to say that God doesn't have a pierced nose? Four days ago, I got one too. Even though I had been anticipating it for a long time, getting my nose pierced was one of the most terrifying experiences of my life. Accompanied by two friends and my mother, I found myself in Pangea Piercing. Four days later, the pain has subsided and I could not be happier with my new nose. My interest in nose piercings has been around for years. However my interest was renewed with an experience I had last semester in Israel. I was in line in a small shop to get my ears pierced, and the two young women in line behind me were preparing to get their noses pierced. These young women were also Orthodox Jews.

My nose piercing has elicited many questions about the Jewish ethics behind piercings. And what I found was not at all what I expected. My first biblical find was a section which stated that if a slave chooses to stay a slave, he should get his ear pierced to signify his love of his master and to brand him as a permanent slave. I may be mistaken, but I hope that people who meet me assume that I am not a slave. In fact, even most Orthodox Jews accept ear piercings on women as a social norm, yet they still discourage nose piercings. The second Jewish teaching I found was in regards to humans being created in the image of God. Some Jews argue that God gave us bodies in the image of God and we should not deface ourselves with piercings. This immediately seemed strange to me. Who's to say that God doesn't have a pierced nose like mine? Why should any kind of piercing be labeled as defacing God's image? What right does a human being have to tell another human being what God wants or doesn't want? And anyway, who would think that being created in the image of God included a body at all.

Yet, the aspect of Jewish tradition that was most striking was the idea that Jews with piercings and tattoos must be buried in a separate part of a Jewish cemetery or, in some cases, cannot even be buried inside the cemetery boundaries. Much to my surprise, this statement is entirely false. Nowhere, in any Jewish text does it say that pierced or tattooed Jews must have different burial procedures. In fact, this different treatment of pierced and tattooed Jews could be considered as a violation of the commandment to honor the dead.

My findings were not only surprising but also reinforced the fact that my piercing did not violate any Jewish law or tradition. Please don't misinterpret my foggy conclusions about God's likes and dislikes when it comes to piercings. No one on this earth knows whether or not God approves of piercings. And for that reason, no one should make judgments about what is acceptable in Judaism and what is not. Piercings are a form of self-expression. Piercings are not a method of rebellion against God or against the religion of Judaism. My piercings should not affect my faith. I still believe in God and in Judaism just as much as I did four days ago.

Piercings are a serious decision. I waited a long time before I (and my parents) were ready for me to get a nose piercing. But piercings are also an aspect of style, just like clothing, or shoes, or hair products. I may never know if God has a piercing. However, I know that my nose piercing will now serve as a constant reminder of my abiding faith in Judaism and in God. ■

Celebrate Chanukah with Ken Pardes

Emily Eisbruch, special to the WJN

Ken Pardes Youth Group at the group's Sukkot event in October.

Ken Pardes, the local branch of Habonim Dror youth movement, is off to a great start for the 2009-2010 school year. Ken Pardes, also associated with Camp Tavor, held a wonderful kickoff picnic at Bandemer Park in September. In October, they had a sukkah decorating party, complete with cider, doughnuts and games about Jewish history. Several other well attended events, including a November Shabbat dinner, rounded off the fall's activities.

According to Yael Warshai, one of the coordinators of the youth group this year, "Coming up on Sunday, December 6th, we welcome everyone to a fun Chanukah party. We are a friendly, fun group and we love meeting new kids! All kids, from age seven and up are invited!" Contact Yael Warshai, at 223-8388, for full details on when and where to meet for the Chanukah party.

Leadership development is a big focus of Ken Pardes. According to Yael, "At the end of December, there will be a Habonim leadership seminar in Philadelphia to be attended by the leadership of Ken Pardes (11th graders and up). Many kids are already starting to look forward to summer 2010 at Camp Tavor as well."

For information about Ken Pardes youth group activities, contact Yael Warshai at yaelw07@hotmail.com or Ron Sussman at ronsussman@aol.com. For Camp Tavor information, contact Kate Sandler at registrar@camptavor.org. ■

JCC youth department offers full range of programs

Deborah Huerta, special to the WJN

Winter Break programs

The Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will offer Winter Break Fun Day programs from 8 a.m.–6 p.m. on December 21–24 and December 28–31. Each Winter Break Fun Day will feature a fun field trip or special activity, plus crafts, games, and gym time or outdoor recess. Students may sign up for one or more days. Programming details for each day will be available in early December.

The Winter Break Fun Day programs are for JCC members ONLY in grades K-5; middle school students are also welcome to participate as helpers for a reduced fee. The cost for each day is $36 for care from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. ($32 for additional siblings) and $10 for Extended Care from 4–6 p.m. Registration and payment are due by Monday, December 14.

Youth Enrichment Classes

The JCC is planning an exciting schedule of after school-classes for the January-February session. Youth Enrichment classes for elementary students will run for 6 weeks,

Programming robots at a JCC enrichment class

beginning Monday, January 11, and continuing through the week of February 15. These fun and stimulating afternoon classes run from 4:20-5:20 pm and are open to both JCC members and non-members. Snack and supervision in the JCC's after school programs before each class are included for all class participants.

The enrichment schedule will be finalized in December, but will likely include several returning favorites such as Fit Kids, Gym Sports, and Lego Robotics, as well as some new offerings such as Chess, Drama, and Art. In addition to the afterschool enrichment classes at the JCC, another session of the popular Swim with Kim class will be offered on Tuesday evenings from 5:30-6:30 p.m. at High Point School.

Registrations and payment for the classes will be due by January 7. Class fees vary.

MLK Day School's Out Program

The JCC will offer two programs on MLK Day (January 18)—a free community performance in the afternoon and an all day School's Out program.

All youth in the community and their families are invited to celebrate MLK Day by attending the free afternoon performance, which will feature the group Singers Of United Lands. S.O.U.L. is a unique quartet of four professional young adult singers, each from a different country. The four singers are remarkable for their high-quality vocal musicianship, geographical diversity, and enthusiasm for sharing about their respective cultures. The performance times and details will be available in mid December. RSVPs for the performance are requested by January 14.

In addition to the community performance, the JCC will offer a full day School's Out/JCC's In program from 8 a.m.–6 p.m. for JCC members ONLY in grades K-5; middle school students may also participate as helpers for a reduced fee. Participants in the School's Out day will enjoy the afternoon S.O.U.L. performance as well as special workshops with the S.O.U.L. singers and other fun activities. The cost for the School's Out day is $36 for care from 8 a.m.–4 p.m. ($32 for additional siblings) and $10 for Extended Care from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Registration and payment are due by Thursday, January 14.

For additional information about the School's Out day or to RSVP for the community performance, contact Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990.

Kid's Night Out on Tu B'Shevat

Every other month, the JCC offers a Kids' Night Out event featuring games, crafts, dinner, and a movie or other special activities. The next Kids' Night Out will be held on Saturday, January 30, from 6:30–10 p.m. at the JCC.

Since Tu B'Shevat falls on January 30 this year, the theme for the event will be celebrating trees and taking caring of the environment. Participants will make crafts with recycled materials, play fun games, and maybe even plant seeds or decorate a cake to celebrate the birthday of the trees. A pizza dinner will also be served and the evening will end with a viewing of the delightful movie *Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest*. This animated film follows the story of the magical inhabitants of a rainforest who fight to save their home from the threat of logging and pollution.

Kids' Night Out events are open to JCC members and non-members in grades K-5. The cost for JCC members is $20 (additional siblings: $18). The cost for non-members is $25 (additional siblings: $23). Registrations and payment will be due by Thursday, January 28. Registration forms will be available at the JCC and at www.jccannarbor.org.

Snow Days

The Youth Department of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor will once again offer Snow Day programs this winter. On days when the JCC is able to open but Ann Arbor Public Schools are cancelled due to winter weather conditions, a Snow Day program will be offered from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. for students in grades K-5; middle school students may participate as helpers for a reduced fee.

Students will enjoy games, gym activities and fun in the snow under the supervision of Youth Director Deborah Huerta and other available staff. Students should bring a nut free, dairy lunch and appropriate clothes for playing outside (weather permitting).

The Snow Days program is for JCC members only and the program fee is $50 (additional siblings and Kids' Konnection / Kids' Club participants receive discounts). Registration in advance is not required, but parents will be asked to fill out a registration form and submit payment when they arrive.

Athletes sought for Maccabi Games 2010

Each summer the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor sends a team of athletes ages 13-16 to the JCC Maccabi Games, an Olympic-style sporting competition that incorporates community service and social activities to combine for an unforgettable experience for Jewish teens. This past summer, Ann Arbor and its Partnership 2000 (P2K) sister community, Moshav Nahalal, joined forces to send eight teens to compete in the JCC Maccabi Games in San Antonio, Texas, from August 9–14. The athletes brought home an impressive total of 18 medals, along with many wonderful memories and new friendships.

Emma Share, who participated as a dancer in both the 2008 and 2009 JCC Ann Arbor Maccabi Teams, had this to say about her experience last summer: "The 2009 San Antonio Maccabi experience was amazing. There is just something cool about being part of a week-long event where you're competing with, hanging out, and befriending Jews your age. Maccabi is a place where you can be proud of your Jewishness and the city you are from. It's amazing to be able to represent Ann Arbor in a city as big as San Antonio filled with athletes from across the nation. And the three Israeli athletes who joined the Ann Arbor delegation this year made the experience truly special…. I would recommend Maccabi to any Jewish teen who likes to have new adventures, have a lot of fun, and make long-lasting memories."

Next summer, Ann Arbor's athletes will once again be joined by Israeli athletes from Nahalal and the combined team will attend the JCC Maccabi Games in Omaha, Nebraska, from August 1–6, 2010. At the Omaha Games, teens will be able to compete in basketball, soccer, volleyball, bowling, dance, golf, swimming, table tennis, or tennis. Athletes of all abilities are welcome to participate and scholarship assistance is available to help defray the costs of attending the Games. Teens must be 13–16 as of July 31 to participate.

For more information about participating as an athlete, coach, or volunteer, contact JCC youth director Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990. A limited number of spots on the team are available each year, so interested families are encouraged to contact the JCC as soon as possible.

For additional information or to register for JCC youth programs, visit www.jccannarbor.org or contact Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990.

Home sick? HDS students stay connected through distance learning

Dina Shtull, special to the WJN

The United States and Michigan Departments of Education and the Center for Disease Control have all recommended that schools ensure continuous learning for children who are home sick. They suggest creating virtual classrooms and electronic learning communities where students and teachers interact even though students may not be physically present in the classroom. Hebrew Day School has been doing just that—keeping students with the flu connected with their classmates and their learning while they are at home recovering.

"I felt very honored to be able to talk and do work with my class while I was sick," says Daniel Zacks, a fifth grader who was out for four days earlier this semester. Zacks and Adi Bamberger, who was also out sick, stayed connected a number of different ways. Descriptions of what was done in class, homework assignments and a link to a YouTube video of a math lesson were all posted on web-based Wikispace. (If schoolbooks were not at home, work was modified and special directions were given.) Video conferencing with Skype allowed the students to fully participate in the class math lesson on dividing decimals. The students could both be heard, and Adi, who had a webcam (digital camera connected to her computer) could be seen on the SMART Board screen in the classroom. When teacher Carol Gannon was computing problems on the SMART Board, the webcam was turned to the Board so that the students could see what was written.

The students were also an integral part of the class science experiment with mealworms. During the observation and documentation of the mealworm behavior, the video camera was positioned next to the class science partner so that the mealworm activity could be seen.

HDS student participates in classroom lesson from home

The student in the classroom and the student at home together discussed and documented their observations. Literature class was next. The class was reading an historical novel, *Behind Rebel Lines,* as part of their study of the Civil War. Zacks and Bamberger followed along and participated in the class reading.

A school day includes lighter moments such as recess or a snack break. Students at home did not miss those moments either. When it was time for a break, teacher Carol Gannon put the words to the class song on the SMART Board, and all the students sang together. If laughter, learning, and friendship can help speed up recovery, it did. Zacks and Bamberger came back to school as if they had never been "home" sick. "I loved being with Skype and learning in the classroom. It was fun, and I could see my classmates," said Bamberger. ■

For more information about Hebrew Day School, call 971-4633. Tours and Open Houses are scheduled for January 12 at 9 a.m. and January 21 at 7 p.m.

December 25th
at the
Michigan Theater

costumes optional
door prizes
sing along

Join us for our annual December 25th movie.

$7 per person
tickets can be purchased at the door or online at
www.templebethemeth.org

Doors open at 10 am, movie begins at 10:30 am.
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We look forward to celebrating with you!

The Jewish Cultural Society
2935 Birch Hollow Drive, Ann Arbor MI
www.jewishculturalsociety.org
734.975.9872

Early Childhood Center goes green

Peretz Hirshbein, special to the WJN

After lunch in the Kangaroo room of the JCC Early Childhood Center, a preschool-aged child picks up her plate, cup, and utensils, walks over to a bucket labeled with one of Ann Arbor's ubiquitous "Compostable" stickers, scrapes off her plate, and then proceeds to rinse her plate, cup, and utensils in a wash bin of soapy water. Then she takes the yogurt container she brought from home and places it in a recycling bin. Later, the bucket will be emptied into a large compost bin, and the cup, utensils, and plate will be sanitized and used again, and again, and again. In the spring, the compost will be used as planting resumes in the ECC's vegetable garden. A similar scene is played out in each ECC classroom after every mealtime.

Louis Perry and Shaul Tovi use found materials to sift and sort.

Aurelia Schaedig recycles her yogurt container

This environmentally friendly mealtime routine, with all that surrounds it, originated with the ECC's director, Noreen DeYoung, who said, "I really had a vision of teaching children to be better ecological citizens of the world. I wanted to see us engaging in Tikkun Olam every day." Slowly but surely, over the last eighteen months, the JCC's early childhood program has integrated green practices into the daily life of the program, and its students. Some green practices started small, but grew over time. The worm box in the hallway that transforms relatively small amounts of organic waste into rich soil led to full-fledged composting that accommodates a large amount of the ECC's daily waste. The use of durable drinking cups for the children many years ago led to the introduction of durable plates in the classrooms last school year, and then real, metal, child-sized utensils this school year.

An environmental consciousness exists not only in the mealtime routines that reduce waste and preserve resources. It also manifests itself in many of the learning materials that are manipulated by the children in the various interest areas of their classrooms: During large group time in the Zebra room, a group of two-year-olds bang materials together in time to the beat of a song. While some of the children use egg shakers and drums devised for this purpose, another child uses the grate from an air conditioning vent and a stick, while another child uses a washboard, an old-time favorite. During Work Time in the Giraffe room, a group of preschool-aged children playing "family" sets the table in their "house" area with real plates and real utensils, and pretends to cook food in a real skillet with a real spatula, all procured at the Ann Arbor PTO thrift shop. During group time in the Duck room, a small group of older infants engages in sensory-motor exploration of interlocking metal rings and tin cans, all found at Recycle Ann Arbor's Re-Use center.

The increased use of these "found," real materials began a number of years ago, when some of the ECC's teachers began to re-use common household items to equip the parts of their classrooms devoted to children's pretend play. Two years ago, however, the ECC adopted a curriculum approach that demanded a re-evaluation of all classroom materials. The High/Scope approach utilized by the ECC places great emphasis on materials that reflect the real lives of children, that appeal to more than one sense, and that can be used in any way a child can imagine. Now, every classroom regularly uses "found" materials not only for children's dramatic play, but also as music materials, sensory materials, and art materials, which provide a greater opportunity for exploration and imagination.

While green routines around mealtimes have reduced the ECC's daily waste dramatically, and the use of "found" materials in all areas of the classrooms have enriched children's learning, these practices have also led to the growth of children for whom the first reaction is not going to be to throw things in the trash. While many children understand the need to recycle and re-use, the development of green habits is critical to making a real connection between the ideal of Tikkun Olam and actions that repair the world every day. ■

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35 YEARS IN PRACTICE

JCC Camp Raanana earns rave reviews for Summer 2009 programs

Deborah Huerta, special to the WJN

It is not even winter yet, but many local children are already counting the days until summer begins so they can return to Camp Raanana. Located on a beautiful private beach front at Independence Lake, Camp Raanana is the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's outdoor summer day camp for children entering grades K-8. The camp offers nine 1-week sessions each summer and provides swim lessons, arts & crafts, Judaics, nature exploration, music, sports, free swim, weekly special events or field trips, and Shabbat celebrations.

Campers are not the only ones looking forward to Camp Raanana's 2010 debut. Camp Raanana's counselors are also excited for the next camp season, and several of them will be coming back for their fifth or sixth year on the camp staff. The high return rate for both campers and staff helps build a wonderful sense of community at Camp Raanana and makes the camp truly special.

Why do families return to Camp Raanana year after year? Comments from Camp Raanana's 2009 Parent Survey provide some clues. For returning camp parents Dan and Hilary Green, the outdoor and Jewish experiences, excellent value, and strong sense of community make the difference: "The kids have a great experience, learn things about the outdoors, Judaism and themselves, and come home dirty, tired, and happy – just the way the summer should be! We really appreciate having swimming lessons incorporated into camp, rather than as an extra with an additional cost. The other wonderful thing about the camp is how many of the counselors and staff are from our own Jewish community and have been to the camp themselves."

Campers enjoy the outdoor camp experience

Other parents also point to the importance of Camp Raanana's staff and the presence of mature male and female role models. Jodi Reel, whose daughter attended Camp Raanana for the first time last summer, had this to say about camp: "Our daughter really blossomed this summer and it all happened so quickly... the independence, the maturity, the connection, all thanks to the camp director and staff. Through the positive leadership of the delightful young women who were her counselors, she has decided at the age of almost seven that she wants to be a counselor one day! Camp Raanana truly exceeded our expectations and was one of the best five week investments we've ever made."

Another important factor behind Camp Raanana's high return rate is the camp's ability to appeal to campers of all ages with its nurturing programs for grades K-2, weekly specialties for grades 3–5, and Pioneer Adventure Program for grades 6–8. Laurie Adams felt that camp provided an excellent transition between the JCC's Early Childhood Center and kindergarten: "I think Camp Raanana is a great way to get the youngest group ready for kindergarten by putting them in a 'new' situation, while keeping them comfortable because they still know many of the kids in their group." Pamela Ramseyer, parent of a third grader, was pleased with the activities offered to third–fifth graders, "My son went on one of the overnights this summer and talked about it for days. What a great experience!" Laura Hirshbein, another third grade parent, was similarly enthused: "My son loved the specialty offerings at camp this year. He came home chatting and excited about science, sports, and photography."

Parents cited many other reasons for their satisfaction with Camp Raanana, including the effectiveness of the swim lessons, the exciting all-camp field trips, and the helpful weekly emails and pictures. But sometimes it just comes down to the fact that their kids love the Camp Raanana experience. Sakina Zerrel reported, "Of all the camps my daughter attended this summer—and that includes sports camp, boating on a tall ship at the Ocean Institute of Dana Point on the Pacific Ocean, and even learning about and taking care of sea lions and seals at Laguna Beach's mammal hospital—Camp Raanana was still her favorite camp!"

Along with the positive feedback on the 2009 Parent Survey, parents also included some suggestions for improvement, and the Camp Raanana staff is working hard to make next summer even better for its returning and new campers. Changes planned include a revamped camp website, improved car-line procedures, and new field trip destinations and mitzvah projects for Pioneer campers.

The camp dates for summer 2010 are June 21–August 20. Early Bird Registration for Camp Raanana will begin when brochures are available in late January. For more information about Camp Raanana, visit www.CampRaanana.com or contact camp director Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990. ■

Camp Raanana hiring staff for 2010

Deborah Huerta, special to the WJN

Assistant camp director sought

Camp Raanana, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor's outdoor summer day camp, is seeking an experienced and dedicated individual to serve as assistant camp director for the 2010 camp season. The assistant director position is a salaried position that is vital Camp Raanana's success and smooth operation. The assistant director works closely with the camp director in the development, implementation, and supervision of all key aspects of the camp program. In addition to the salaried period from June-August, the assistant director will be paid on an hourly basis for assisting with pre-camp preparations in the spring.

Applicants for the assistant director position must be at least 21 years of age by the start of camp, have previous supervisory experience, and have extensive familiarity and experience with Judaic and camp programming. Applicants must also have a minimum of eight weeks of full-time experience working with elementary or middle school aged children, including at least four weeks of full-time administrative experience in a camp or similar program (unit head, program coordinator, head counselor, etc.). Applicants should have or be working toward a bachelor's degree in a related field (education, Judaic studies, social work, camp administration, etc.) and have special certifications (lifeguard, health officer, CDL license, etc.) or willingness to attain certification preferred.

Now hiring new counselors, specialists

Camp Raanana has several staff openings for next summer. Counselor-in-Training positions are available for teens who have completed 8th or 9th grade, Junior Counselor positions are available for teens who have completed 10th, 11th, or 12th grade, and Head Counselor and Specialist positions are available for college and post-college students.

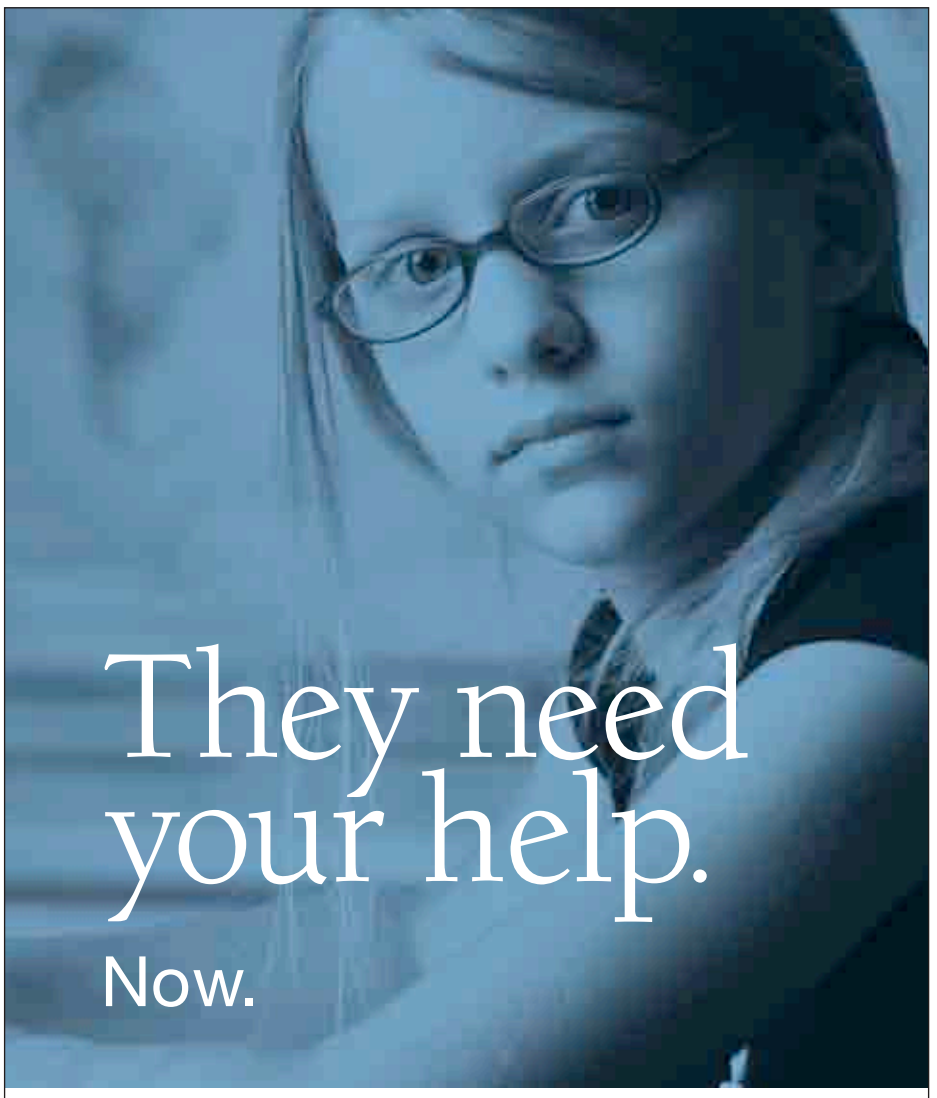
The Counselor-in-Training program is a fun and supportive program for teens who have completed 8th or 9th grade and are making the transition from camper to counselor. CITs receive training and hands-on experience in child development, leadership and team-building, conflict resolution, program planning, and first aid. CITs also get to participate in social activities and special field trips. Teens may register for one or both four-week CIT sessions ($360 for the initial four-week session, $60 for a second four-week session) and will receive an honorarium for their work upon successful completion of the program. Teens must fill out an application and meet with the camp director to receive approval to enter the program. Accepted applicants will be required to attend several pre-camp training sessions in June. A limited number of CIT positions are available; interested families are encouraged to contact the camp director in January or February.

Teens who have completed 10th, 11th, or 12th grade are eligible to work as Junior Counselors at camp. This is a paid position which requires a four or eight week commitment. Camp Raanana's Junior Counselors work directly with a group Head Counselor who acts as a mentor and involves the Junior Counselor in planning and implementing all camp activities. Junior Counselors must have previous experience in a camp setting and be able to attend several pre-camp training sessions in June. Interested teens should contact the camp director in December or January to request an application.

Members of Camp Raanana's praise-winning staff

Camp Raanana is also seeking mature and talented individuals to fill several eight-week Head Counselor and Specialist positions. Applicants for these positions must have completed at least one year of college (or equivalent), have previous experience in a camp setting, and be able to attend several pre-camp training sessions in June. Positions available may include lifeguard; arts and crafts specialist; Judaic programs specialist; sports specialist; nature specialist; special needs coordinator; aftercare coordinator; general counselor; and middle school travel group counselor. Applications will be accepting beginning in December; interested individuals should contact the camp director as soon as possible to request an application and obtain details about the available positions.

For more information about working at Camp Raanana or to request an application, contact Camp Director Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or 971-0990.



The Washtenaw Schools Millage did not pass.

As a result, the Ann Arbor Public Schools Educational Foundation is asking for your immediate donation. We have a 17-year history raising private donations for the Ann Arbor Public Schools – and today we're pleading for your help on behalf of our community. Our kids. And our collective future. We're asking you to donate the amount you were willing to pay through a Millage "Yes" vote as seen below. It won't solve the budget shortfalls. But it will take us one step closer to keeping our schools innovative and excellent. And 100% of your money will stay in Ann Arbor.

Home value (or more)	Taxable value	Suggested donation
$150,000	$75,000	$150
$200,000	$100,000	$200
$250,000	$125,000	$250
$300,000	$150,000	$300
$500,000	$250,000	$500
$750,000	$375,000	$750
$900,000+	$450,000	$900+

Note: Taxable value is estimated at 50% of home value.

ANN ARBOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Educational Foundation

To be part of the solution, visit **www.supportannarborschools.org/urgentneed** or call Christy Perros at **734.355.8597**

Building life skills and Jewish identity for the youngest

Susan Horowitz, special to the WJN

When infants and toddlers arrive for school each morning at the Jewish Community Center Early Childhood Center, their day promises to hold much more than simple daycare routines. Through interactions with teachers and other students, activities centered on the children's interests and skills, and an age-appropriate Jewish curriculum, even the youngest of children gains important social, emotional, communication, and self-help skills throughout their time in the program.

Toddlers look at books together.

As one infant explores a textured material, another watches intently

Supporting the exploration and discovery central to a young child's life is one of the primary responsibilities of a successful infant/toddler program. In the infant/toddler program at the JCC, the support is offered in numerous different ways. Much of the day is devoted to free choice time, where children have the opportunity to explore the array of classroom materials. The interests expressed by the children during free play also form the basis for teacher-initiated small and large group activities. Many of these materials and activities pose challenges and questions for the children: How does this string of beads move through this tube? What will this sponge feel like in my hands, on my face, or against my tummy? What will happen if I bang these spoons together? Through their play, the children not only discover the answers to these questions, but also gain important problem solving skills and a sense of independence. Additionally, exploring with these materials in the presence of peers and caregivers provides the foundation for developing early social skills. Watching and interacting with others triggers a whole different set of questions: What is that child doing with her blocks? Can I mimic that action? How can I communicate to my friends or teachers that I need help solving this problem?

In addition to these life skills, at the Jewish Community Center children also get a sense of what it means to be Jewish from the very beginning. Celebrating Shabbat is an important part of the week for infants and toddlers. The Jewish holidays are the basis for many special activities throughout the year, including making and tasting traditional foods, learning new songs, and community-wide programs and celebrations. Words like "torah," "challah," and "shalom" are a part of the children's vocabulary from the time they begin to speak. The Jewish Community Center offers a sense of Jewish identity for even the youngest of children.

Infant/toddler care is about so much more than just care. It is about interacting with others, solving problems, and developing a sense of self. A successful infant/toddler program provides young children with the foundation for developing a sense of personal identity and skills that will last a lifetime. ■

At Sukkot time, the toddlers encounter a pumpkin

Learning what is Jewish about a moose (and much more!)

Cindy Saper, special to the WJN

The Jewish Educators Council of Ann Arbor recently hosted Jewish Naturalist Gabe Goldman as Scholar-in-Residence. Dr. Goldman is the Director of Experiential and Environmental Education at American Jewish University. He is well known for his unique teaching style that blends his love of Jewish text with his knowledge of nature and the environment. During his visit to Ann Arbor, he led a workshop for area teachers, and visited the Early Childhood Center of the JCC, Hebrew Day School, Temple Beth Emeth Religious School, Beth Israel Religious School, Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah Beit Sefer, and Jewish Cultural Society School. Rounding out his visit were two Shabbat family Nature Walks. Teachers and students alike had many "wow" moments as they engaged in hands on learning during the workshops. Following are just a few comments:

"I found *a lamed* in the bush!" JCS student.

"I loved Gabe's open, welcoming and encouraging teaching style." BIRS teacher.

Gabe Goldman with ECC students

"Who knew that the moose is the world's largest kosher animal?" TBE teacher.

"Wow, ink from wasps?!" JCS parent.

"What fascinated me the most was seeing, for the first time, a gall nut and learning how it is used to make the ink used for the writing of the Torah." BIRS teacher.

Gabe showing students how ancient heroes made fire

"Gabe's presentation was perfectly pitched to my students. The next week students were still talking about how exciting it was to hold the moose antler." Havurah teacher.

"The middle school students were mesmerized! Gabe raised their curiosity and they were very tuned in to his message that God's creation is to be explored and admired." BIRS teacher.

"My students who are studying Jewish heroes learned about survival skills needed back in biblical times. Learning how to make a fire with flint and stone, and how to make tea from sumac, gave them a whole new perspective to their classroom learning." TBE teacher.

As all these comments show, Gabe was able to connect in a very unique way with the entire community. Teachers were so impressed with his ability to engage everyone in the study of nature from a Jewish perspective. From the relatively simple idea of having students look up to find the shapes of the Hebrew letters in the trees to the more complicated halachic discussions of why various animals are considered kosher, teachers were inspired to continue exploring our Jewish connection to nature with their students. The Jewish Educators Council's annual Scholar in Residence program is made possible by a generous grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. ■

Jewish educators test the strength of rawhide

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Thursday, December 3
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Vanessa Ochs, University of Virginia
"The Stories Jewish Homes Tell"

Thursday, January 14
12 pm, 202 S. Thayer St., 2022
Naomi Feuchtwanger-Sarig, Tel Aviv University
"On Reading Art: Text, Image and Interpretation in Early Modern Ashkenaz"

Thursday, January 28
12 pm, 202 S. Thayer St., 2022
Michal Kravel-Tovi, Hebrew University
"Rite of Passing: Contemporary Orthodox Conversion in Israel"

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JCC Book Festival

1

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3

4

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1. The Local Authors Brunch celebrated the community's creativity
2. Author Judith Endelman
3. Ira Berkow signing Karen Silverman's book at Baseball Night
4. Book sales were brisk throughout the week
5. Author Karen McGinity
6. The nine Lunch and Learn programs were enjoyed by many
7. Debra B. Darvick read her book *I Love Jewish Faces* with the aid of Fran Martin
8. Author Dan Senor signing at JCC Book Festival
9. Brunch at the Local Authors Fair was a big success
10. The book sale continues at the JCC through Chanukah
11. Sammy Margolis, Cammy Brown, Elaine Margolis, Julie Brown, and Helen Brown at the American Girl Doll Tea

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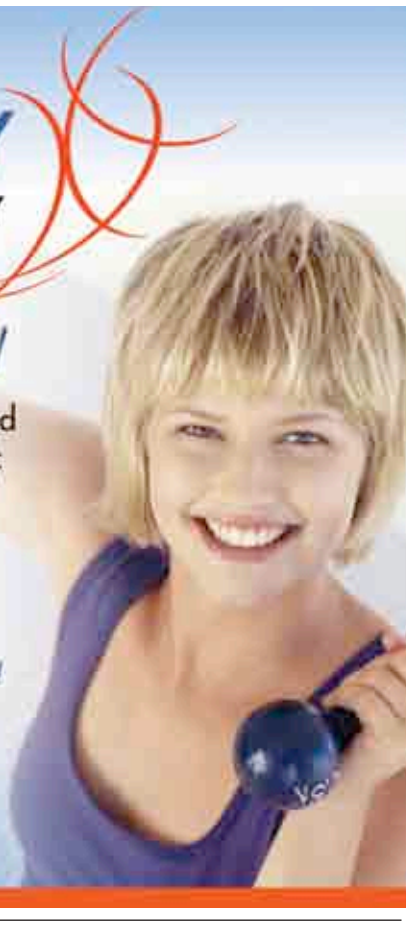

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A2SO CD release party, December 17

Sandor Slomovits, special to the WJN

The Ann Arbor Symphony's first ever recording has been available via electronic download from the Naxos label since September at www.naxos.com, but beginning on the 15th of this month, the physical CD will be available at Borders Books, Barnes and Noble, and at other music outlets and from the Naxos Record Company.

I recently sat down with A2SO Music Director, Arie Lipsky, after one of his Afternoon Delights chamber music concerts at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor and asked him about the new recording.

WJN: How did you decide that the A2SO's first recording would be all Paul Fetler's music?

Lipsky: Some things are bashert. (Yiddish word, meaning "destined, inevitable, or meant-to-be.") Something happens and you have no idea why and twenty years later you go… oh wow, now I understand.

I joined the Buffalo Philharmonic as their principal cellist in 1984. The music director then, Semyon Bychkov, liked the music of Paul Fetler. I'd not heard his music before, or of him. This was sometime in the late 1980s, and Paul at that time was in his late 60s. The Buffalo Philharmonic used to play lots of new music, and, as a player, you always treat anything new with a little suspicion. You know, because it's hard to compare to Brahms and Beethoven and Mozart and Bach and all these great geniuses of history. And when you read also about new music during the time of Mozart and Beethoven, you realize that there was so much more than these names, but somehow history has a way of….

WJN: Distilling?

Lipsky: Yes. The good stays, the rest just goes. And I see my role… I'm supposed to give everything a chance, and do my best to present new music to audiences, and then history will decide. That's the way it is in theory anyway, [laughter] but in practicality, after you play some new pieces a couple of times, you figure out very fast whether they're likely to survive or not.

In any case, I don't know how Bychkov was introduced to Paul Fetler, but the first piece we played in Buffalo were these three poems of Walt Whitman that Paul set to music. (It is those settings that begin the A2SO's recording.) Right after the introduction, I said to myself, "Oh, this is a person who knows what he's writing." We played it on a tour even, including at Carnegie Hall. And it stayed with me for a long time. We played the violin concerto as well, and some other pieces by Paul. But then the years went by and I forgot about them—until a couple of years ago. It was right after a performance we gave of Lincoln Portraits by Copland. (Former University of Michigan football coach, Lloyd Carr, and former U-M basketball coach, Tommy Amaker served as narrators for that piece.) After the concert I had dinner with the Blaskes, as I often do, because we're just like family. [Tom Blaske, who is the narrator of the Walt Whitman poems on the new A2SO recording, coached the two coaches for their roles in the Lincoln Portraits performance. Blaske, who is a prominent local attorney, is also a Whitman scholar and an accomplished poet whose work has been published under a pseudonym in The New Yorker. He is married to A2SO Executive Director Mary Steffek Blaske.] We started talking about the Copland work and the fact that there are not many pieces with narration. Then, somehow we began talking about Tom's favorite poet, Walt Whitman, and I said, "Bingo!" And then the bashert happened. [Laughter] I said, "Tom, you know, there is a piece by Paul Fetler that uses Whitman poems, and I'll try to see if I can resurrect it." I was able to get, from the Buffalo Philharmonic archives, a recording of the performance of this music. I listened again, this is many years after, and it was still very appealing to me. I played it for Tom and he said, "Oh, wow. This is a real treasure."

So we contacted Paul, who at that time was already retired and living in Sarasota. He had been the composer in residence of the Minnesota Orchestra for ten years, and he was also professor of composition at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. I contacted him and told him we would like to perform it and he was so excited. Brought back a lot of memories for him; he remembered the Buffalo performances very well. He said he would like to attend our performance. And so three years ago he did. The audience received the piece very warmly, Tom did a wonderful job, and the orchestra played fantastically. So, then we started talking about the possibility of recording. That used to be a very touchy issue because of union regulations. But the policies have changed and it's much easier now to record. Especially if it's a live concert, rather than a whole recording session, where you do each section again and again, till you get it right. So, we were able to raise the funds and at that point we thought maybe it would be a good idea to have a CD that presented Paul's music. I asked him about his "Second Violin Concerto" and he told me that that has not been recorded either, and also this little chamber orchestra piece, the "Capriccio." And, even though he was at the time in his late 80s, he said about the Capriccio, "I'm not comfortable with that. Let me do a little revision."

WJN: Like Brahms. [Laughter] (In the Afternoon Delights concert, Lipsky, along with A2SO concertmaster Aaron Berofsky and pianist Joel Schoenhals, played the "Brahms Piano Trio No. 1," and Lipsky told the audience that Brahms originally composed the piece as a very young man, but late in his life he rewrote it because he was not satisfied with it.)

Lipsky: Yes. And so Paul also rewrote his "Capriccio." And I think he achieved the same results. It got much better. And then, since we could not do one whole program of Fetler, because not many people know of him, we decided to record each piece in a different concert over two seasons.It was very exciting, because people in the audience were told that they were going to be featured, with their clapping….

Arie Lipsky

WJN: And hopefully not their coughing. [Laughter]

Lipsky: Right. So we recorded these three pieces. At each concert, as part of this new agreement with the musicians, we were able to stay another half an hour after the concert and just work on specific spots that might need a little correction. And we recorded the dress rehearsal as well. Then after we had all the material, we had a producer, Thomas Gerdom, and we worked together and came back with something that we're very, very proud of.

continued on page 30

Former Ann Arborite Lea Grossman, Yiddishe Cup's biggest fan

Reflections from the band leader

By Bert Stratton

She got us into The Ark. She kugeled the former program director, Dave Siglin. She delivered a noodle kugel to his office on Pauline Road. He liked it and he hired us. (Hopefully our music had something to do with getting us into The Ark too.)

I had been avoiding Ann Arbor until then. I had attended the University of Michigan during the hippie era and hadn't learn much. There had been a quasi-ban on book learning then. The foreign language requirement had been oppressive according to protestors, and the psych teaching assistants—leading T-Groups—gave everyone A's, in protest of grading. Until I signed up. Then it went to pass/fail.

When my own kids started looking at colleges, I told them Michigan was a swamp. Too big, too impersonal.

I rooted for Ohio State over Michigan. I had a problem! I told Michigan to stop sending me alumni mail. But for $75, I hedged and sent a donation every year. You never knew.

Thanks to super-fan Lea Grossman, I wound up back in Ann Arbor, big-time. Lea was 60-something and got around like a coed. The woman could dance, party, and cook. She knew every Jewish dance and sang "Tumbalalaika" on stage with Yiddishe Cup at The Ark.

Lea lived near North Campus in a university-affiliated retirement community. It was like a dorm for seniors—real seniors.

North Campus—the last time I had been there—had been a music school, a smattering of grad student housing, and one undergraduate dorm. It had been the end of the earth. The dorm was Bursley – as in "brrr, why am I standing at a campus bus stop, freezing my ass off."

Lea with Yiddishe Cup and friends

For Yiddishe Cup's Ark gig, I picked January (2005). Not too many rational Clevelanders scheduled weddings in January, so we had an opening.

Ann Arbor's weather was just like Cleveland's. Crappy. And we got a huge crowd at the club. That was weird. The difference between Ann Arbor and Cleveland was Ann Arbor had a puffy coat brigade. The worse the weather, the more the puffy coaters came out. It was almost an Upper Midwest can-do chic—like something from the Progressive Era—a bunch of Jews in puffy coats.

On that first Ark trip, my youngest son stayed in the North Campus dorm, Bursley. He was in eleventh grade. He liked it and wound up at Michigan.

So I returned to the swamp—to see him, and play gigs. (My other kids went to small liberal arts colleges.)

I couldn't get the *Michigan Daily* to write up Yiddishe Cup. Ever. I tried. The reporters wouldn't return calls. Maybe the reporters weren't be too crazy about talking to a klezmer guy.

When I had been a *Daily* reporter, I had enjoyed the John Lennon and Miles Davis assignments, not the one where I profiled the Discount Records clerk who played sax. (That sax player, Steve Mackay, turned out to be pretty good. He cut some records with the Stooges.)

Lea didn't know who to kugel at the *Daily*; the young *Daily* reporters were always rotating in and out. They missed a good dish.

Lea moved to New Jersey in early 2009.

Yiddishe Cup has played The Ark yearly since 2005. ■

Upcoming show: Saturday, January 23, 2010, 8 p.m. at The Ark, 316 S. Main Street, for tickets, call 761-1451 or go to wwwtheark.org. Tickets are $20 or $10 with a student ID.

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False witnesses' "vigil" continues into seventh year, *continued from page 1*

not the last people they see before entering the main sanctuary to worship their God.

Back across the street, also observing the protesters are a couple bicycling along the side streets with their teenage daughter trailing close behind.

They slow up at particular intersection across from one demonstrator when the father says "It's a holiday, but those people are Jewish too," in response to an inaudible question from the girl, no older than 15.

"So, wait, the Jewish people are against Israel?" she asks, her eyebrows furrowed underneath her protective helmet.

"Yes. Well those ones are," he responds, picking up speed as they whiz by, "But you've got to consider the source."

Indeed.

Though they've become visible fixtures along that stretch of roadway on the Sabbath, not much is known of the individuals who are loathed by some and strangely revered by others in the community as examples of the Constitution in action.

And most of them like it that way, happy to lend the soles of their shoes to a cause they believe in, but eager to operate in silence and virtual anonymity. One hijab-wearing protestor on the synagogue sidewalk covered her face with a placard when confronted by a photographer. Her sign alerted cars on Washtenaw Avenue: "Zionist Lobby Inside." Peeking out to find the photographer still there, she ducked back behind the sign and screamed, "I know you're going to assassinate me!"

Once at least a dozen strong—with others willing to come in the carload from neighboring Ypsilanti and even Dearborn—the weekly vigils are down to about four regulars.

Resilient, and seeking as much attention as possible along Ann Arbor's main entrance-way thoroughfare, the group makes up for their lack of numbers, and over-abundance of signs by placing them on car windshields, leaning them against fire hydrants, and making use of speed limit signs and hulking tree trunks.

Now well into their sixth year of standing, they have yet to gain any meaningful dialogue with the synagogue's leadership or base congregation. They have also fallen short on repeated attempts with local elected bodies to boycott Israeli goods or repudiate its sovereignty as a Jewish state.

The driving force

That said, the core of the group remains committed to a belief that not just Israelis, but all Jews who support a Jewish national home, are responsible for inflicting tragedy upon tragedy on Palestinians.

Despite their dwindling numbers and losses before the University of Michigan Student Assembly, the U-M Board of Regents, the Ann Arbor City Council, the Ann Arbor People's Food Co-op, and the Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice, don't let them hear you say they've lost any momentum for their cause or activism on a larger, more meaningful scale.

Aimee Smith of the Huron Valley Greens Party amplifies her objections to Celebrate Israel Day outside the JCC on May 17, 2009. Though not Muslim, Smith who wears a hijab, scolded the crowd, "Stop pretending you're from Arabia. Be proud of your European roots." At a previous JCC event she chanted, "Defecating on children's drawings will not bring peace." Smith, who brought her daughter to help shout down the Jewish community event, was her party's candidate for Congress.

"We don't measure it, but there is a preponderance of support among passersby who honk, and increasingly so," said Witnesses founder and vigil creator Henry Herskovitz.

"Certainly, we get three or four middle fingers each day, but no one's running their car off the road at us."

While most of the demonstrators prefer obscurity—many refused to be interviewed under their real names for this story—the same can't be said for Herskovitz, their unequivocal leader.

Herskovitz, 63, is a long-time Ann Arbor resident and recent retiree from an engineering firm in Tecumseh. He said he works part-time driving a vehicle for a local car dealership he refused to name for publicity purposes.

Although he claims to have attended services at the synagogue he now pickets, an initial search revealed no member by that name. Perhaps it is because for much of his time in Ann Arbor the Pittsburg native was known by his given name, Henry Henry. ("Can you imagine parents saddling a kid with that?!" he once complained to a member of Beth Israel.) Though coy about his previous career, Herskovitz is very comfortable saying his advocacy on behalf of Palestinians has become his life's work and true calling.

He first started demonstrating in 2003, he says, out of frustration from being denied a forum amongst other Jews to discuss his particular view of the conflict, which he says was shaped greatly by a visit to Palestinian refugee camps in 2002.

PHOTO BY GREGORY FOX

Mozhgan Savabiesfahini

He said he hoped to appeal to the Jewish consciousness after the suffering he saw, alter the congregation members' course of action and have them question their support of Israel. If those motives were true, the extreme tactics backfired, delegitimized their mission and instead galvanized a Jewish community against them, Jewish and non-Jewish observers of the situation said.

"I've heard a pretty wide range of opinions about the Middle East [in the congregation] including no lack of people very critical of the Israeli government," said Dan Cutler, an Ann Arbor resident and Beth Israel member. But the picketers don't care about actual opinions among real people in the congregation, he contends. They use the Jewish families simply as a backdrop to denouncing opinions they imagine congregants hold. Cutler cites a disturbing encounter when the picketers first showed up. One told him, "Jewish prayers should be disrupted. You pray for genocide." A white-haired woman holding a sign denouncing Israel rushed over to add, "It's true! It's true!" and when he turned to enter the synagogue she yelled, "Come back here. I'm not through with you yet!"

Cutler's disdain is shared by many, including those who have no connection to the synagogue, but who respect the congregation's right to worship free of outside disturbances. "The thing that twinges me is that it's the impropriety of doing it in front of a place of worship," said Stephen Pastner, a retired anthropology professor at the University of Michigan, with an Islamic world focus that causes him to be particularly irked by distortions of historical/cultural fact. Pastner has created his own commemorative t-shirts with caricature depictions of the protesters, whom he likes to call "Herskovites." They tend to label Herskovitz and other members of the group as "self-hating" Jews and honestly question some members' sanity.

Herskovitz acknowledges regularly attending sessions with a therapist over the years, but insists he isn't crazy.

"I think that critics always want to find a real personality flaw and try to exploit that and say, 'that's the reason,'" he said. "What that does is create a cheap diversion of the public's attention. Pay no attention to the Israeli atrocities, but focus on Henry so nobody wants to take up the issue."

The wingman

If Herskovitz is the captain, then Sol Metz is easily his first mate in the protest effort.

No longer right by his side, Metz, cofounder of the group, typically stands two to three feet from Herskovitz each and every week, carrying his own signs and blown-up photo he took of a Palestinian woman weeping over the rubble of her demolished home. His long white hair and frothy, prolonged beard make Metz hard to miss, and he isn't hiding from anybody.

Somewhat of a throwback from Ann Arbor's counter-culture and anti-war movements, Metz often spoke his mind on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through frequent letters to the editor submissions to the *Ann Arbor News*, and has attempted rational dialogue with opponents.

But don't expect much objectivity on the topic. The retired computer programmer said he grew up in a Jewish home with blind love for Israel instilled by his parents. But his disillusion with the Vietnam War spread to the Arab-Israeli conflicts of that time and provided a new line of thinking about the Jewish state.

Decades later, his own journeys to disputed territories after the second Intifada solidified his desire to take his ex-hippie wares to a new cause.

But Metz's story is replete with contradictions. He married his first wife, Rosemary, in Detroit in 1967, but only after she converted to Judaism, he said.

"I had already pretty much rejected (Judaism) at that point and I didn't really want her to, but she did, for me," he said recently when confronted with facts from court records.

Their marriage lasted nearly 20 years and took almost another two years to dissolve, according to divorce records. Though not specifically detailed in legal briefs, diverging views on Judaism had become a factor in the marriage, he said. They settled on joint custody, but Metz had physical custody of the couple's four children, ages 4 to 17, at the time of filing.

Though he is now a Quaker, Metz—after a long pause—acknowledges that two of his four children are practicing Jews today and don't have much respect for his efforts.

It was right before and during that period of transition through the divorce that finances became a stiff challenge, he said. He insists that at Rosemary's urging, he turned to the local Jewish Federation for help with clothing and other needs for his family.

Along with the Shabbat protests, Metz is a fixture with his signs outside the Federation's larger gatherings and planned to picket this year's Main Event, featuring nationally syndicated radio talk show host Peter Sagal.

He said groups like the Federation are what need to be stopped because of the money they raise for Israel. He is convinced the majority goes to military projects and settlements rather than humanitarian causes, despite his own experience with them.

continued on nextpage

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He's aware of the hypocrisy, but remains unfazed by it.

"That's fair to say, but I don't see a big problem with it," Metz, 66, explained. "The U.S. government helps me too, but I don't have any problem criticizing them either.

"I didn't want the (Federation's) help and I didn't think they [his children] needed it."

Metz said he has recently remarried to someone not as active in the cause, but a believer who stands firmly behind him.

The others

Also protesting is Gloria Harb, a resident of Glencoe Hills apartments in Pittsfield Township.

She said she participates because she believes the United States' political system is corrupted by Jews intent on furthering Israel's agenda before America's. Though a staunch liberal, Harb said her greatest concern is that the pro-Israel lobby is so prevalent and powerful in Washington D.C., that President Barack Obama will cave to pressure on the Middle East peace process and allow harmful concessions.

She sat dumbfounded after a recent protest pondering the notion that hawkish right-wingers both here and in Israel have the same fear.

"I'm just one member of the group, and I focus on the American public and breaking the silence," she said. "I know there are some of us who hold out hope of reaching some of those people in the synagogue, but not me."

On most Saturdays, congregants and passersby will also see Marcia Federbush holding signs. Though the smallest in height and the oldest at 75, Federbush brings some noteworthy stature to the group.

In 1988 she was inducted into the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame for her pioneering work battling gender discrimination in education. She divorced her husband before their 32nd anniversary about a year later. Until about a year ago, her daughter, Laurel, was a mainstay at the Shabbat protests and staunch defender in local media and blogs.

However, she no longer joins them and is now a member of Beth Israel Congregation herself.

"She had an epiphany, of sorts, I guess," Herskovitz said. "Laurel's gone to the dark side. She quit the vigils, and voted for McCain."

Apparently no longer with the group are Dr. Katherine Wilkerson and immigration attorney Blaine Coleman.

Herskovitz said Wilkerson stopped participating in the demonstrations after losing her position with the Packard Community Clinic. She stood trial on misdemeanor charges of interfering with police and emergency medical personnel at a speech protest on the University of Michigan campus that also involved Coleman, police reports show.

Wilkerson was acquitted by a jury in 2007, but she was fired a year later over a contract dispute.

The circumstances were less dramatic for Coleman, who was asked to leave, Herskovitz said without really elaborating.

"It's accurate, we threw him out of the group," he said bluntly about a rumor circulated about Coleman's departure. "I won't say much else about it other than people have to be responsible for their own decisions. But he's on the right side of the issue as far as I'm concerned."

Pastner, an unpaid watchdog of the protesters on area blogs, said he knows Coleman's writing after years of engaging it via on-line chatrooms and message boards, and does not buy into reports of Coleman's inactivity.

Not just a Jewish problem

What has become increasingly clear over the years is that the group's futility in terms of swaying mainstream Jews to their cause has not prevented them from being as ineffective outside the local Jewish community.

Marcia Federbush

Their members have been removed by police from Ann Arbor City Council meetings and their behavior forced changes to Council's public comment policies. The Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice decided to close down its Middle East Task Force and disruptive behavior has been banned from ICPJ meetings and gatherings. According to Chuck Warpehoski, "Earlier this year the Interfaith Roundtable had Henry escorted out of their meeting by the police. Since then the Roundtable has changed their format to invitation-only, in part to promote deeper sharing, but I think also to stop Henry's disruptions. Henry's actions have been very disruptive in the community. I've heard him heckle speakers at a rally organized by the Muslim community, and I've seen him counter-protest a candlelight vigil for peace in Gaza and southern Israel."

Herskovitz and his group's actions have earned them a reputation, to say the least.

"They are annoying, they are distasteful and they sometimes can be painful, but ultimately, they're not serious," said David Shtulman, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. "In medical terms, they'd be hemorrhoids."

Yet in their search for legitimacy among Ann Arbor's progressives, they have been able to disrupt a few Ann Arbor institutions where you'd least expect. In one example, former protesters Aimee Smith and Michelle Kinnucan ascended to leadership positions in the local Green Party.

Once focused on building-block issues like the environment, instant run-off voting, and domestic social justice, the party quickly became laser focused on Palestinian rights under Smith's and Kinnucan's leadership.

"It was very difficult for the Greens to get any traction locally since we were blamed for losing the 2000 election for (Democratic Nominee and Former Vice President Al) Gore and we were building it back," said former local party member, founder and city council candidate Peter Schermerhorn.

"But it's gone, and it's been gone ever since they [Smith and Kinnucan] were put in charge"

Schermerhorn, also a member of the Ann Arbor's People's Food Co-op's board of directors, saw the disruption they caused by trying to push a boycott on Israeli products, and follow-up attempts to join the group's leadership in 2008.

Because of their involvement, and specifically because of opposition to their tactics of protesting a house of worship, both efforts were defeated, soundly, Schermerhorn recalled.

But with a new board and unclarified by-laws on a boycott process, the Co-op was not prepared for the controversy those affiliated with the "Witnesses" and blowback that followed.

"We spent about $5,000, lost a year of work and our outreach suffered because we couldn't focus on much else. It totally took us off mission," said former board president Linda Diane Feldt. Again, their tactics overshadowed their message.

"It really just closed doors, and that's the tragedy in this," Schermerhorn said. "An open discussion would've done some good, at least some educating," he said.

What's next?

After years of disrespect and public acrimony, the congregation and protesters are as polarized as they've ever been, each resolute not to budge on principle and pride.

Is there any room to maneuver toward some resolution?

Herskovitz insists he won't stop without a dialogue with Beth Israel's Rabbi Robert Dobrusin, and an incredible gesture on the congregation's behalf.

"I speak for myself, but if they take the flag down from the *bima*, I'm gone," he said. "Show the rest of the world that you are truly a place of worship and not a place of national support for the State of Israel. Take the flag down, and Henry's gone."

The request is absurd, Rabbi Dobrusin said. "It will not happen," he insisted. "We have no obligation to them to consider what they ask us to do."

Though not a religious symbol, the flag has a place in the synagogue in order to represent a sovereign state, recognized by the world as the Jewish homeland, he added. Dialogue with any religious, political, or humanitarian group is predicated on mutual respect and acceptance of the legitimacy of the State of Israel.

Don't bet on it, said Metz, reveling in the supposed momentum gained by the group last year when Hiller's Market made a minor change to some print advertisements after a feeble boycott attempt.

"I'm confident there will be a resolution to the conflict in the Middle East," he said. "I'm not sure it will happen in my lifetime but I think it's happening quicker now because of the work we're doing."

Shtulman said dialogue with the protesters seems futile and he doesn't mind taking a more direct approach to refute their claims of effectiveness.

If it didn't break spirit of Shabbat, he'd run the sprinklers every Saturday while services are underway.

"There's a sense of entitlement they have that everything they want to do is okay, and I don't think the Jewish community needs to accept it," Shtulman said. "It's my wish that they shall become pariahs in the community."

Herskovitz and the others said they feel a hardening of spirits from the congregation.

"I think it's unrelated to the tactics," he said. "I think, I hope, that we're humble enough to see if there is another group reaching a synagogue or a Jewish community somewhere else using tactics different than ours, we'll follow their tactics. But I haven't seen it."

In the meantime, the congregation will remain resilient.

"What I tell people is to join us inside," Rabbi Dobrusin said. "We live in a great country where people have the right to free speech and where we can gather as a people to celebrate who we are. And that part is not going to change." ■

Magen David Adom beneficiary of picketers' persistance

WJN *staff writers*

SPURN (Synagogue Protest UNACCEPTABLE! Respond Now!) was created as a grassroots campaign by Beth Israel congregants as a way to alleviate the frustration caused by the picketing outside their shul. Congregants chose to respond by doing good deeds; specifically, raising money for American Friends of Magen David Adom (AFMDA, website http://www.afmda.org/) to help fund Israel's national emergency medical, disaster, ambulance, and blood bank service. They chose Magen David Adom because it is a humanitarian organization serving all victims of violence without regard to ethnicity or religion.

SPURN (website http://www.aaspurn.org/) has been raising money since July 30, 2004. Thus far, they have raised over $141,000, and have received contributions from more than 500 donors. A small cadre of SPURN donors continues to contribute based on the number of picketers each week (or in a lump sum each year). Other donors have given one or more contributions unrelated to the number of picketers. Many congregant families (and their relatives) have donated, but they have also received contributions from Ann Arbor residents without a direct Beth Israel connection, and literally from people all over the world. "In the end," states SPURN organizer Barry Gross, "we cannot control what those outside our doors are doing. What we can do is to make sure that the prejudice they flaunt every Saturday results in good actions that benefit Jews and others in need."

To stand with SPURN, send checks to: American Friends of Magen David Adom, ARMDI Midwest Region, 3175 Commercial Avenue Suite 101, Northbrook, IL 60062. Write SPURN on the check or on an accompanying note. Donors may also call AFMDA with credit card information and specify that the donation is for SPURN. The toll free number is (888) 674-4871. Also, donations can now be made on-line at https://www.afmda.org/. The website has been revamped and the new link does not go directly to "donate now." A donor must sign up and log in before making a donation. The donor needs to click the box for this question—"Would you like this donation to be made in honor of one of our campaigns?" And then, a drop down menu appears. SPURN is one of the choices.

For success on the festival of oil, fry, fry again

By Linda Morel

NEW YORK (JTA)—Several Chanukahs ago my husband came home with an electric deep fryer large enough to accommodate a 12-pound turkey. I'd heard of suburban folks frying turkeys in their garages, but because we live in a Manhattan apartment I was less than thrilled with the gigantic appliance—which I had no room to store.

That first Chanukah, however, I acquiesced to deep frying a turkey, which turned out to be more delicious than you can imagine. The bird was moist on the inside and crisp on the outside, an achievement that anyone who has roasted a turkey can tell you is no easy feat. Surprisingly the bird didn't taste greasy.

Better yet, the preparation time was reduced from several hours to 45 minutes.

Since then, fried turkey has become one of our most treasured holiday traditions. Of course on the first night of Chanukah, we fill four skillets with latkes. Nothing is crunchier than grated potatoes browned in spattering oil. But on another night of this eight-day holiday, we invite a crowd and deep fry a turkey. As we light colorful Chanukah candles, our apartment fills with the scent of serious searing. Watching the candles twinkle, our family and friends can't wait to gobble the turkey.

Deep fried turkey is a fitting way to celebrate Chanukah, the festival of oil, because its preparation requires several gallons of oil. But how did fried foods become entwined with Chanukah's culinary history?

It started more than 2,100 years ago when the Greek king of Syria, Antiochus, occupied Israel. During his reign, the Jews and their customs faired poorly. When one of his officers arrived in a town outside of Jerusalem, he demanded the Jews take part in a Greek ceremony that entailed bowing to an idol and eating pork, both of which are forbidden by Jewish law.

Outraged by such disrespect, the Maccabee family led a revolt to overthrow the occupiers. After defeating the Greek army, Judah Maccabee and his men began restoring the great Temple in Jerusalem, which lay in ruin.

Candles had not yet been invented, so specially prepared olive oil was used to light the Temple's menorah. Finding only a one-day supply of the oil to keep the menorah burning, the Maccabees were awestruck that it lasted eight days, long enough for a new batch to be made.

This spawned the eight-day celebration of Chanukah and the custom of observing the holiday by frying foods in oil.

During the Maccabees' time, cheese pancakes were a popular fried food. Latkes weren't added to the Chanukah repertoire until centuries later. Jews from various countries now fry many kinds of foods, including donuts, fritters and pancakes.

My husband's family hailed from the Jewish community of Trieste, Italy, so every Chanukah we also deep fry rice balls. An Italian delicacy, these crunchy balls, held together with ricotta cheese, are a sensational hors d'oeuvres or side dish.

While fooling around in my kitchen, I've successfully fried some unexpected foods from Jewish cuisine into a whole new identity. Slices of sour pickles undergo a crusty transformation when they hit hot oil.

Chopped fish, eggs and matzah meal are usually mixed together to form patties that are simmered in broth to produce gefilte fish. But instead of boiling these large oval patties, I roll the batter into small balls and deep fry them. After one taste, you'll never settle for bland gefilte fish again.

Frightened by the thought of dealing with raw fish? Forget the stories about your bubbe who tackled a live karp in her bathtub every time she cooked gefilte fish. Instead, ask your fishmonger to grind the haddock, whitefish or pike you order. From there, handling the fish batter is as easy as forming hamburger patties.

On the theory that you can fry anything, I suggest widening your Chanukah repertoire. Here are some ideas:

- Submerge any kind of pitted black or green olives (but not bottled or canned) into hot oil, where they will develop a delicious pucker within a minute or two.
- If pressed for time, slide thinly sliced potatoes or florets of broccoli and cauliflower into a pot of hot oil until they turn delightfully brown. After placing them on paper towels and sprinkling with kosher salt, you'll savor every crisp mouthful.
- Canned chickpeas can be fried into a sensational hors d'oeuvre or snack. Dry them on paper towels. Put a mixture of curry powder, cumin, flour, paprika, and a dash of cayenne pepper into a plastic storage bag. Place the chickpeas into the bag in batches, seal, and shake them until they're coated. Deep fry them in oil, drain on paper towels, sprinkle with kosher salt, and serve them immediately.

In spite of these other delicacies, I have to admit that I wait all year for Chanukah because of the crackling texture of potato pancakes. But I find I can eat latkes for only so many days in a row before seeking other foods to fry. ■

Safety tips for stovetop deep frying

1. Use a deep pot or saucepan, not a skillet or frying pan. A pot that comes with a basket insert is preferable.
2. Face the pot's handle away from the edge of the stove to reduce the chances of knocking over a pot of hot oil. If possible, place the pot of oil on a back burner.
3. To reduce the chances of spatters or oil bubbling over, do not fill the pot or saucepan with oil more than halfway.
4. Heat the oil on a medium flame. Do not raise the flame.
5. Always use a long-handled, slotted utensil to submerge or retrieve food from hot oil. Wear pot mitts when touching this utensil.
6. Never submerge frozen, ice cold or wet foods into hot oil as they may cause flare-ups.
7. To drain fried foods, lay down paper towels a reasonable distance from the flame so they do not catch fire.
8. Keep small children away from the stove when you are deep frying foods.
9. If the oil in the pot sputters or boils up, turn off the flame. Do not use that oil again.
10. When you are finished deep frying, turn off the flame and let the oil cool to room temperature before discarding it, preferably in a bottle or can with a top.

Deep frying turkeys

Getting started:

1. While some people fry turkeys by rigging up garbage cans on barbecue grills or above open fires, this is a dangerous practice. A safer route is to purchase a deep fryer from a reputable company, such as Masterbuilt. You can contact Masterbuilt online at http://www.masterbuilt.com, or by phone in Columbus, Ga., at (800) 489-1581.

2. For safety sake, it is imperative to follow all instructions that accompany a deep fryer.

3. When deep frying, you must use fresh (not frozen) turkeys.

4. Use an oil with a high smoking point (preferably 450°.). Aficionados recommend peanut oil as it imparts the most marvelous flavor. However, corn oil, safflower oil and canola oil are also safe choices. With the quantity of oil required, about 2 to 4 gallons, I suggest purchasing the oil at Costco or another of the big box stores.

The brine:

Non-kosher turkeys must be brined before deep frying them. However, because kosher turkeys have already been salted, they should not be brined.

Ingredients:

1/2 pound kosher salt
1 pound dark brown sugar
6 quarts of hot water
24 ice cubes
12-pound turkey
Brining bag (available at Williams Sonoma) or unused tall kitchen trash bag

Preparation:

1. In a large bowl, stir salt and sugar in hot water until dissolved. Add ice cubes to cool down the brine. If it's still warm, chill it in the refrigerator. When cooled, pour the brine into a brining bag or line a pot deep enough to hold a turkey with an unused tall kitchen trash bag. While the brining bag is stiff enough to hold its shape, the trash bag is flimsy so it must be kept inside the large pot during brining.

2. Place the turkey into the bag and seal it. To keep the turkey submerged, cover the outside of the bag with weights, such as unopened cans of food. Do not brine the turkey in the deep fryer. Refrigerate for 8 to 16 hours.

3. Thoroughly rinse off the brine before deep frying the turkey. Pat the turkey dry completely with paper towels because water can cause a flare up when exposed to hot oil.

4. Before deep frying the turkey, follow the manufacturer's instructions for technique, timing, and amount of oil needed.

Beer battered sour pickles

2 or 3 sour or half sour pickles, sliced 1/8-inch thick. Discard ends and tiny pieces.
1/4 cup flour
1 egg
1 cup beer
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 cup panko, Japanese-style breadcrumbs.
Can be purchased in most supermarkets, many gourmet food stores, and Asian groceries.
1 quart corn oil, or more, if needed

1. Drain pickle slices on both sides on paper towels. Place flour on a plate and roll slices in flour.

2. Place corn oil to a depth of 3 inches in a medium sized deep saucepan. Heat oil on a medium flame to 375° on an oil and candy thermometer, or until a drop of water sizzles in oil.

3. Using an electric mixer, whisk together egg, beer, and baking powder. Add panko and blend until well incorporated.

4. Immediately dip floured pickle slices into batter. Let excess drip off. Using a long handled slotted utensil, submerge a few slices into the oil. Fry for 2 to 3 minutes, or until batter puffs and turns crunchy. Remove slices with long-handled utensil and drain on paper towels. Serve immediately.

Yield: Approximately 30-40 pickle slices

Fried rice balls Italian style

1 egg
2 cups of cooked rice of any kind
1 tablespoon flour
3 tablespoons ricotta cheese
3 tablespoons olive oil, or more, if needed

1. Beat egg in a large bowl. Add the cooked rice. Stir to blend. Add the flour and ricotta cheese. Blend until well combined.

2. With your fingers, form rice mixture into balls 1 inch in diameter. Your hands will be sticky, but manipulate rice mixture until you form perfect tight spheres or they will fall apart while frying.

3. Cover a cookie sheet with aluminum foil. Place balls on the foil. Cover balls with plastic wrap and refrigerate them for 1 hour, or until they are firm.

4. Place olive oil in a large skillet, rolling it around until bottom surface is well oiled. Place as many rice balls as will fit comfortably in the skillet, leaving room to turn the balls with a wooden or plastic spoon. When bottom of balls brown, roll them around until another surface browns. Continue frying until balls are completely brown all around. With a long-handled slotted spoon, move balls to a plated line with paper towels. Continue frying until all balls are crunchy and brown. Serve immediately.

Yield: 20 rice balls

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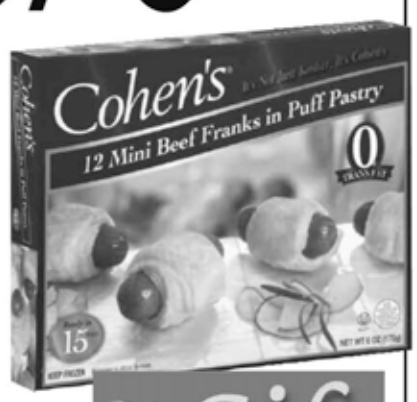

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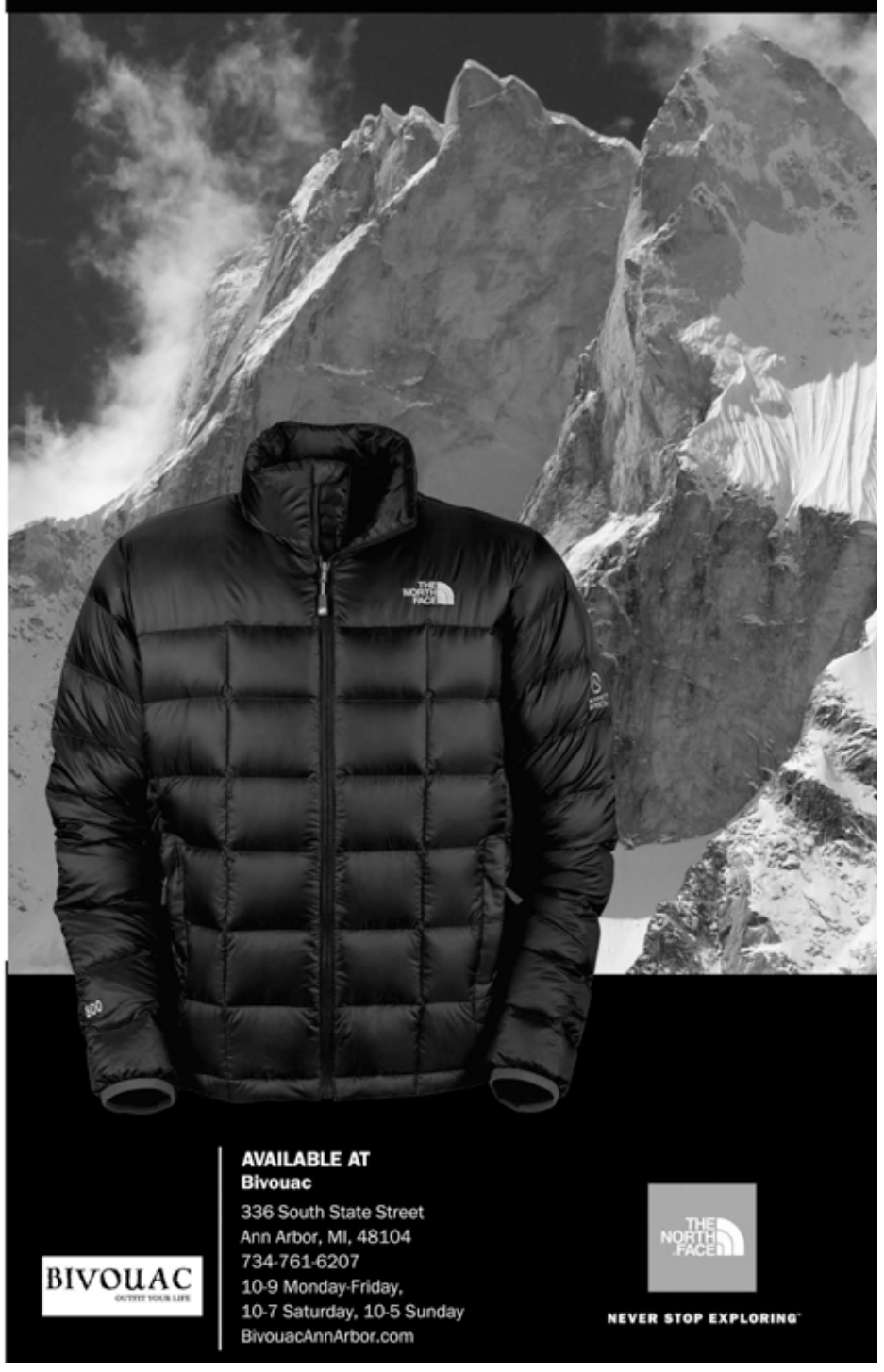
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Lax, continued from page 1

an outstanding attorney specializing in zoning, employment law, and litigation. He is listed in The Best Lawyers in America 2010 and is also professor emeritus in the department of urban planning at the U-M. Since 1990, Jerry has been a partner at Bodman, LLP. In addition to Jerry's professional career, he has also lent his many talents to a wide array of important causes. Jerry has served on the boards of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, Temple Beth Emeth, Performance Network and Planned Parenthood.

How have Judie and Jerry managed to find so much time for volunteer work while still balancing their professional lives? Their choices and decisions arise from the causes which most align with their personal interests and to the needs of the community. "In a community like Ann Arbor," Jerry noted, "there are so many worthwhile organizations that I would find it difficult not to make the time for participating in their work." Judie summed it up well, "You get back more than you give"—words of true philanthropists.

The Claire and Isadore Bernstein Leadership Award was established to honor the founding members of Jewish Family Services. In 1977, Claire and Iz (z"l), organized a resettlement committee to assist Russian Jews who came to Washtenaw County and these activities led to the creation of JFS in 1993. Today, JFS remains the primary Washtenaw County resource for resettlement of immigrants and refugees. JFS also assisted with the temporary resettlement of families displaced by Hurricane Katrina and is currently helping to resettle hundreds of local refugees.

But this is only a part of JFS's mission. The agency also provides crucial support to families in crisis, at-risk children and teens, isolated and low-income older adults and their caregivers, career services for unemployed individuals, as well as services for refuges and émigrés. Last year's award recipients, Rachel Bendit and Mark Bernstein, established an Emergency Aid Fund to assist individuals and families impacted by the current economic crisis. Since September 2008, JFS has served 800 clients in crisis, providing more than $20,000 in direct cash assistance for eviction prevention, utility shut-off and unexpected bills (medical, auto repairs, home repairs, etc.).

JFS has leveraged gifts from individual donors and rabbis, as well as a $15,000 Community Emergency Fund established by the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, to apply for and obtain additional funds on behalf of clients. FEMA and the Washtenaw Home Builders Association Foundation have provided an additional $13,500 in funding for emergency aid. These gifts and grants, along with support from United Way and other community partners, also partially subsidize the part-time crisis intake social worker who is the point-of-entry at JFS for crisis calls, information and referral, and case management.

Judie and Jerry have requested that proceeds from the January 24 event, as well as gifts in their honor, be earmarked to the Emergency Aid Fund. This request is another example of their commitment to the community at this time of need.

To register, or for more information about the event, visit the JFS website at www.jfsannarbor.org or contact Robin Little at 769-0209 or robin@jfsannarbor.org. ■

A2SO CD release, continued from page 24

WJN: It's a wonderful recording. At our house, we've been listening to it constantly.

Lipsky: You know, you wonder why a person like Paul is not more recognized. I've asked myself that many times. And if you have a chance to talk with him, you'll understand. You know, in this age, you have to know how to market yourself. He is so shy… he wouldn't do anything to promote himself. He's really old school, European. "You like it, fine. If you don't like it, it's OK." And in this environment you need to have a little of that push. As my father used to say, a schpilke in toches, [Laughter] a needle in the toches, somebody to push you. [More laughter]

Of course, I didn't know Paul when he was forty or fifty. But, I've heard this from several people that he's always been this way. You know how some people mellow with age. He's always been like that. But, when you read his resume, and you see the people with whom he studied, Boris Blacher in Berlin, Paul Hindemith at Yale. These are giants. And then you hear his music, where he got all these ideas, and you speak with him and hear him describe his style as, "progressive lyricism." Progressive, because he uses an obviously 20th century language, but it's always something you can relate to. He is always inviting you. You can be sure, that if you give it a second hearing, you'll like his music. It's something that really grows on you. So, I hope and I feel that this will put him where he needs to be. Because I think he's one of the United States most important composers, on the same level as the great founders of the 20th century American scene, like Copland and Barber. I hope that this CD will contribute to this understanding, and that, as a result, more orchestras will perform these pieces and his other important pieces. And I hope that he will be able to join us. I think next year he turns 90. That's a big one.

WJN: Are you planning more recordings?

Lipsky: I hope we can do more of these. The orchestra has proved it can really go through that. Because it's such an undertaking. It's an expensive and musically challenging experience—for any orchestra. I imagined, once we had the first one done, that it would be easier to do another one, but then, with the economic climate… I guess we'll have to wait to do the second one. But, you know, once you have the first baby, the second is easier.

WJN: That's what they say. I wouldn't know. [Laughter]

Lipsky: That's right. [More laughter]

The Ann Arbor Symphony will host a celebratory CD release party on Thursday, December 17, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Michigan Theatre. Paul Fetler, Arie Lipsky, Aaron Berofsky and Tom Blaske will all be there. For more information, check the A2SO's website, www.a2so.com.

December 2009

Tuesday 1

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

"Monotheism and Mutiny: Holy War in Ancient Judaism." Frankel Institute. Presented by Aharon Openheimer. Room 1022, 202 South Thayer Street. Noon.

SoulQuest: Jewish Learning Institute. "The Journey Through Life, Death, and Beyond." Fall semester course examines the twin mysteries of life and death that have fascinated philosophers and laymen since the dawn of time. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Spirituality Book Club: TBE. Led by Cantor Annie Rose. This month's selection is *A New Earth,* by Eackhart Tolle who contends that humans are on the verge of creating a new world by a personal transformation that shifts our attention away from our ever-expanding egos. 7:30 p.m.

"Walking with God Part I–Tanakh and Rabbinic Literature:" BIC. Presented by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. 8 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. Class led by Rabbi Glogower covering various topics treated over a period of one to several weeks. Material is presented in English and Hebrew. 8 p.m. at U-M Hillel.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 2

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring dairy lunch. Drinks and dessert provided. Noon.

Board Meeting: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

Judaism 101: BIC. Shabbat. 8 p.m.

Thursday 3

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Weekly special events and guest presentations (see description below); Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Presentation: JCC Seniors. Birthday celebration for all with birthdays in December for family and friends. Lunch and birthday cake at 12:30 p.m. followed by presentation and discussion on depression and older adults led by Mariko Foulke, social worker at the University of Michigan Turner Clinic. 1 p.m.

"The Stories Jewish Homes Tell." Frankel Institute. Presentation by Vanessa Ochs. Room 2022, 202 South Thayer Stree. Noon.

Mussar: TBE. With Judy Freedman. 7:30 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 4

Mussar: TBE. With Judy Freedman. 11:30 a.m.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Followed by songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Saturday 5

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Morning Minyan at 9:30 a.m

Sweatshirt Shabbat: BIC. Followed by Cholent Kiddush. 9:30 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Family Latke Hop: JCC. Games, crafts, havdalah, dinner and live music. Special mystery guests will headline the event. $12/adult members; $5/children over age two. $14/adult nonmembers; $6/children over age two. RSVP at 971-0990. 6–9 p.m.

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 6

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Beth Israel Café: BIC Women's League. Open to parents of religious school students, both men and women. 9:30 a.m. Beth Israel Social Hall.

Seasons of Mussar II Group: BIC. 9:45 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Chanukah Party: ORT. The Ann Arbor chapter of ORT America will hold its annual "Chai'Nukah" party at the Nature Cove Condominiums Community Room, 2115 Nature Cove Court. Latke cook-off with prizes. Party-goers asked to bring $18 donation to ORT plus a wrapped, gently-used accessory for gift exchange. RSVP to Brenda Riemer or Jeanne Thomas at 429-5948. 3–5 p.m.

Workshop: TBE Sisterhood. Jewish Cooking 101: Latkes. 6 p.m.

Basic Judaism: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Lilith Salon: TBE Sisterhood. 7:45 p.m.

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday*.

Monday 7

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Women's Torah Study: TBE. With Cantor Annie Rose. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 8

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

SoulQuest: Jewish Learning Institute. "The Journey Through Life, Death, and Beyond." Fall semester course examines the twin mysteries of life and death that have fascinated philosophers and laymen since the dawn of time. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

Movie Tuesday: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. Viewing of the film *Trembling Before God,* a documentary that includes interviews and follows several gay and lesbian Orthodox Jews, and also interviews several rabbis and psychologists regarding their views on homosexuality in Orthodox Judaism. 1 p.m.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Chanukah Wonderland: Chabad. Chanukah store in heart of downtown at 500 Liberty Street. Chanukah supplies for sale plus programs for children all week. Party for adults and children on Sunday, December 13 from 5–7 p.m. Store open through December 16.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. Bi-monthly men's study group. 7:30 p.m.

"Walking with God Part I–Tanakh and Rabbinic Literature:" BIC. Presented by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. 8 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. Class led by Rabbi Glogower covering various topics treated over a period of one to several weeks. Material is presented in English and Hebrew. 8 p.m. at U-M Hillel.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 9

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch. Drinks and dessert provided. Noon.

Judaism 101: BIC. Shabbat. 8 p.m.

Thursday 10

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Weekly special events and guest presentations (see description below); Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Health Check and Discussion: JCC Seniors. At 12:30 p.m. a registered nurse from Care Response will take and record blood pressures and address questions. (This event is repeated the second Thursday of each month.) Followed at 1 p.m. by a discussion of how the first decade after World War II witnessed major changes in how we lived, covering family, housing, education, music, appliances and work. Join the fun in remembering what you were doing back when.

Presentation: BIC Women's League. Dr. Vanessa Ochs, research fellow at the University of Michigan Frankel Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, will explain her research, "Beyond the Menorah and Tzedakah Box: How Do Objects Make a Jewish Home Jewish?" 7:30 p.m.

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Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 11

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Dinner, songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Human Rights Shabbat: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Saturday 12

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Morning Minyan at 9:30 a.m. and Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m.

Kehillat Shabbat: BIC. For 1st through 5th graders. 11 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. For preschoolers and their families. 11:15 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Chanukah Party: TBE Renaissance Group. Dinner and white elephant gift exchange. The Renaissance Group is a social group for members ages 55 and up. 6 p.m. at Chapel Hill Clubhouse. For details, call TBE office at 665-4744.

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 13

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Concert: JCC. The Chaverim B'Shirim choir will present a concert featuring the music of Harold Rome. Songs from the musical *Call Me Mister* will be featured. $5 donation requested. Refreshments will be served. 3 p.m.

Latkepalooza: BIC. Latke dinner with games, crafts, stories and lighting of the Hanukkiot. 5 p.m.

Basic Judaism: TBE. Led by Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 14

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Women's Study Group: BIC. Contact Rabbi Blumenthal at 665-9897 for meeting place and more information. 8 p.m.

Tuesday 15

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including Mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Shalom Baby Class: JCC. One-time class for moms and babies (newborns to crawlers) featuring "Post-Baby" Strength and Body Sculpt exercises and parenting discussions. For information or to register, contact Halye Aisner at 971-0990 or email halyeaisner@jccfed.org. Register by December 11. 9:30–10:30 a.m.

SoulQuest: Jewish Learning Institute. "The Journey Through Life, Death, and Beyond." Fall semester course examines the twin mysteries of life and death that have fascinated philosophers and laymen since the dawn of time. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

"Walking with God Part I–Tanakh and Rabbinic Literature:" BIC. Presented by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. 8 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 16

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch. Drinks and dessert provided. Noon.

Tot Chanukah Dinner: BIC. 5:30 p.m.

Meditation: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

Judaism 101: BIC. Shabbat. 8 p.m.

Thursday 17

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. No exercise or current events session today. Intergeneration Chanukah Celebration at 11 a.m. (see details below). Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

Intergenerational Chanukah Celebration: JCC-ECC. Children from the Early Childhood Center and seniors will celebrate Chanukah together. Seniors will share Chanukah stories, artifacts and Chanukiot with the children. Singing, dancing, crafts and lunch follows. Parents and grandparents invited. 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Discussion: JCC Seniors. At 12:30 p.m., Allison Pollock, MSW, Jewish Family Services Geriatric Social Worker, will be available for discussion, questions and assistance. At 1 p.m., Rabbi Levy of Temple Beth Emeth will join SPICE for Chanukah program.

Caregiver Conversations: JFS. Monthly facilitated discussion for adult children in a variety of caregiving roles for aging parents. This month's topic is "Jewish Perspectives on Caregiving." Caregiver Conversations is sponsored by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, and co-sponsored by the JCC, AARH, TBE, BIC, and JCS. For information or to register, contact Abbie at 769-0209 or email abbie@jfsannarbor.org. 6:30–8 p.m. at the JCC.

Mussar: TBE. With Judy Freedman. 7:30 p.m.

Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 18

Mussar: TBE. With Judy Freedman. 11:30 a.m.

Meditation: TBE. 1 p.m.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat, Dinner and Services: TBE. Tot Shabbat and dinner with menorahs and a story, followed by tot Chanukah dinner including a craft project and songs. Open to the community. $5/person for dinner. Reservations encouraged at 665-4744. 5:30 p.m.

Latke Dinner: TBE Brotherhood. Open to the community. $10/person. Reserve at www.templebethemeth.org.

Chanukah Celebration: Hadassah. The Ann Arbor Chapter of Hadassah celebrates with latkes and a white elephant gift exchange at the home of Julie Ellis, 3929 Waldenwood. Bring an item for the gift exchange. Reserve by December 13 to Martha Young at 769-7523 or email youngmartha@comcast.net.

Chanukah Shabbat: TBE. For all ages. Bring a menorah and candles to celebrate the last night of Chanukah. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 19

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m. followed by morning minyan at 9:30 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar*

Sunday 20

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 21

Winter Break Fun Days: JCC Youth. During school breaks, the JCC Youth Department offers full day field trips and special activities for JCC members only in grade K-5. Middle school students may participate as helpers for a reduced fee. Bring nut-free, dairy lunch and appropriate clothing for outdoor play. $36/day; $32/additional siblings. $10/aftercare. 8 a.m.–4 p.m.; Aftercare from 4–6 p.m. For information, contact Deborah Huerta at 971-0990. *December 21–31.*

Women's Torah Study: TBE. With Cantor Annie Rose. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 22

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including Mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

SoulQuest: Jewish Learning Institute. "The Journey Through Life, Death, and Beyond." Fall semester course examines the twin mysteries of life and death that have fascinated philosophers and laymen since the dawn of time. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. Bi-monthly men's study group. 7:30 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Thursday 24

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

Comedy Presentation: JCC Seniors. Local stand-up comedienne, Paddy Ash, entertains with her healthy humor. 1 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 25

Movie: TBE. Showing of *The Music Man* at the Michigan Theater. Doors open at 10 a.m. Film shown at 10:30 a.m. $7/ticket per person. Concessions for breakfast and lunch, from bagels to kosher hot dogs. Prizes. Dress in costume, if desired. Tickets in advance at www.templebethemeth.org or in the TBE office, 2309 Packard, Monday through Thursdays, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. and Fridays from 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 26

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Morning Minyan at 9:30 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar*

Sunday 27

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 28

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Tuesday 29

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m.; $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

SoulQuest: Jewish Learning Institute. "The Journey Through Life, Death, and Beyond." Fall semester course examines the twin mysteries of life and death that have fascinated philosophers and laymen since the dawn of time. 9:30–11 a.m. at Chabad House and 7:30–9 p.m. at the JCC.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Thursday 31

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

Video: JCC Seniors. Enjoy one hour of favorite comedian Jack Benny, the archetypal *ongeblozen* tightwad. 1 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

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January 2010

Friday 1

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Followed by songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 2

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Morning Minyan at 9:30 a.m

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 3

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 4

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Women's Torah Study: TBE. With Cantor Annie Rose. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 5

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Spirituality Book Club: TBE. With Cantor Annie Rose. This month's selection is *Kitchen Table Wisdom,* by Rachel Naomi Remen, who has a unique perspective rooted in her background as a physician, professor of medicine, therapist and long-term survivor of chronic illness. 7:30 p.m.

Topics in Jewish Law: AAOM. Class led by Rabbi Glogower covering various topics treated over a period of one to several weeks. Material is presented in English and Hebrew. 8 p.m. at U-M Hillel.

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Calendar

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 6

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch. Drinks and dessert provided. Noon.

Board Meeting: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

Thursday 7

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Weekly special events and guest presentations (see description below); Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Birthdays and Presentation: JCC Seniors. Birthday celebration for those with January birthdays. Family and friends invited to join for lunch and birthday cake at 12:30 p.m. Followed at 1 p.m. by a representative from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Michigan who will illustrate how to get information about ancestors.

Mourning and Mitzvah: TBE. First session of series with Cantor Annie Rose. 7:30 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 8

Lunch and Learn: TBE. With Rabbi Levy. Discussion of "Issues of Israel over Time and Space," examining Israel as a hope, dream, fantasy, power, home and destination through the lens of Israel as an eternal idea and also a modern nation state. Noon.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Dinner, songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 9

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Morning Minyan at 9:30 a.m. and Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m.

Kehillat Shabbat: BIC. For 1st through 5th graders. 11 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. For preschoolers and their families. 11:15 a.m.

Opera "Live:" TBE Renaissance Group. See the opera *Der Rosenkavalier* live at the Met on the big screen at Quality 16 Theater. The Renaissance Group is a social group for members ages 55 and up. $17.50/seniors over 62; $22/others. For details, call TBE office at 665-4744. Noon.

Kol Halev Cabaret: TBE. Evening of music by members of Kol Halev. 6 p.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 10

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Jewish Cooking 101: TBE Sisterhood. 6 p.m.

Presentation: BIC. Ellen Pollock, PhD, presents, "What We Don't Know About the People We Love Could Fill a Book." 7:45 p.m.

Basic Judaism: TBE. Led by Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday*.

Monday 11

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Adult Learning: TBE. "Bible, Morality, and the 21st Century," with Dr. Cobi Sacerdoti. Three-part course providing intellectual look and emotional journey into the moral wisdom of the Bible, where arrogance, pride, jealousy, love and devotion impact human life. *Also January 11, January 25 and February 8.*

Women's Study Group: BIC. Contact Rabbi Blumenthal at 665-9897 for meeting place and more information. 8 p.m.

Tuesday 12

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including Mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Movie Tuesday: TBE. This month's selection is *The Lemon Tree,* an Israeli drama depicting the lives of Palestinians and Israelis and their struggle to come to grips with family history, political strife, the beauty of the land, and love. 1 p.m.

Afterschool Classes Begin: JCC Youth. A variety of enrichment classes begin this week for elementary students during the January–February session. Classes run 4:20–5:20 p.m. and are open to both JCC members and non-members. Snack and supervision in the JCC's afterschool programs before each class are included for all class participants. Registration due by January 7. Class fees vary. For information or to register, call Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org of phone 971-0990.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

Men's Torah Study: TBE. Bi-monthly men's study group. 7:30 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 13

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch. Drinks and dessert provided. Noon.

Judaism 101: BIC. Prayer. 8 p.m.

Thursday 14

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Weekly special events and guest presentations (see description below); Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Presentation: Frankel Institute. Naomi Feuchtwanger-Sarig of Tel Aviv University presents, "On Reading Art: Text, Image and Interpretation in Early Modern Ashkenaz." Room 2022, 202 South Thayer Street. Noon.

Health Check and Recital: JCC Seniors. At 12:30 p.m. a registered nurse from Care Response will take and record blood pressures and address questions. (This event is repeated the second Thursday of each month.) Followed at 1 p.m. by a performance by UM School of Music violin student, Paul Dryden Trapkus.

Mourning and Mitzvah: TBE. Second session of series with Cantor Annie Rose. 7:30 p.m.

Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 15

Lunch and Learn: TBE. With Rabbi Levy. Discussion of "Issues of Israel over Time and Space," examining Israel as a hope, dream, fantasy, power, home and destination through the lens of Israel as an eternal idea and also a modern nation state. Noon.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Followed by songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Corned Beef Dinner: TBE Brotherhood. Open to the community. $10/person. 6 p.m. Reserve at www.templebethemeth.org.

Shabbat Service Honoring Teachers: BIC. Honoring BIRS teachers followed by dinner. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service with Kol Halev: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Saturday 16

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Morning Minyan at 9:30 a.m. and Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Quiz Night: BIC. Annual quiz night. 7 p.m.

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 17

Beth Israel Café: BIC Women's League. Open to parents of religious school students, men and women. 9 a.m. in the Social Hall.

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Presentation: Frankel Institute. "Voices of the Holocaust," presented by Caroline Helton and Kathryn Goodson. Kerrytown Concert House. 4 p.m.

Basic Judaism: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday*.

Monday 18

MLK Day Performance and School's Out Day: JCC Youth. Free community afternoon performance featuring the group Singers of United Lands (time TBA), plus full day program for JCC members only in grade K-5. Middle school students may participate as helpers for a reduced fee. Bring nut-free, dairy lunch and appropriate clothing for outdoor play. $36/day; $32/additional siblings. $10/aftercare. 8 a.m.–4 p.m.; Aftercare from 4–6 p.m. RSVP for the performance and registration for the School's Out Day are requested by January 14. Contact Deborah Huerta at 971-0990.

Women"s Torah Study: TBE. With Cantor Annie Rose. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 19

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m., $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including Mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Yidish Tish (Yiddish Conversational Group): All ages and levels welcome including UM and non-UM participants. 1:30 p.m. at Beanster's Café, ground floor of UM Michigan League. For information, call 936-2367.

"Walking With God Part II–Medieval Texts Through Modernity:" BIC. Presented by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. 8 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday*.

Wednesday 20

Lunch and Learn: BIC. Bring a dairy lunch. Drinks and dessert provided. Noon.

Meditation: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

Judaism 101: BIC. Prayer. 8 p.m.

Thursday 21

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

Chanukah is Dec 11-18

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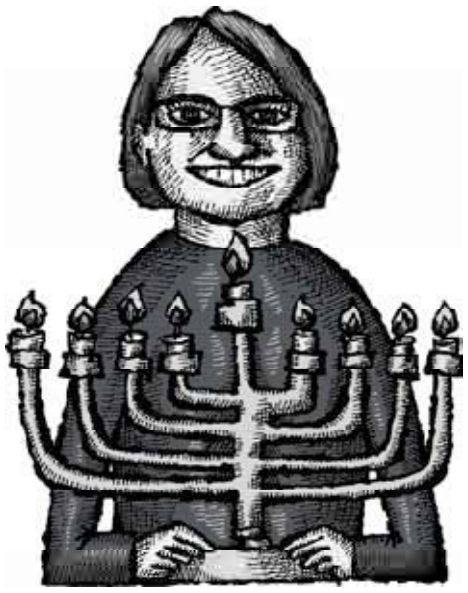
Here are some of our favorite things for holiday feasting or gift-giving with food-loving family and friends.



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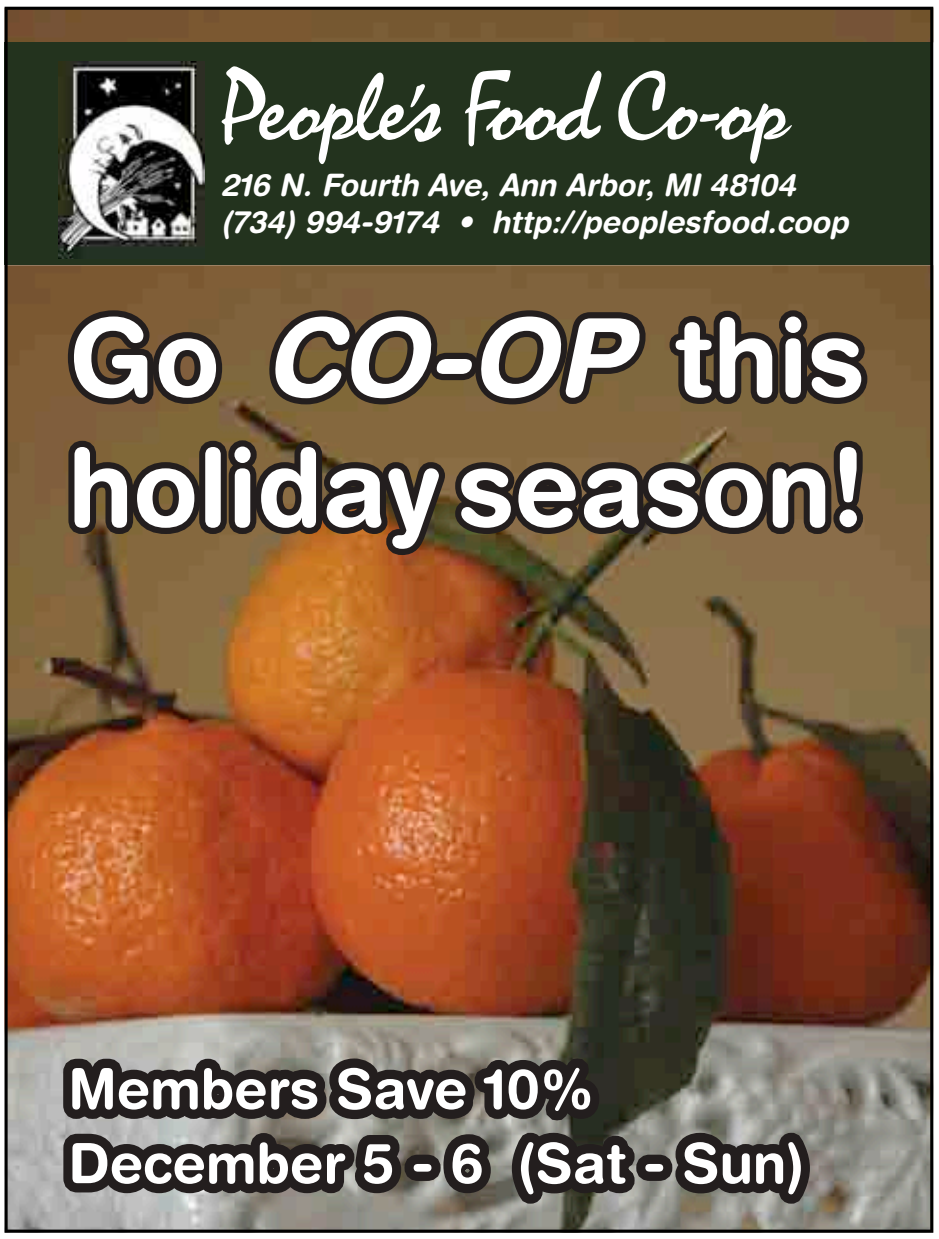
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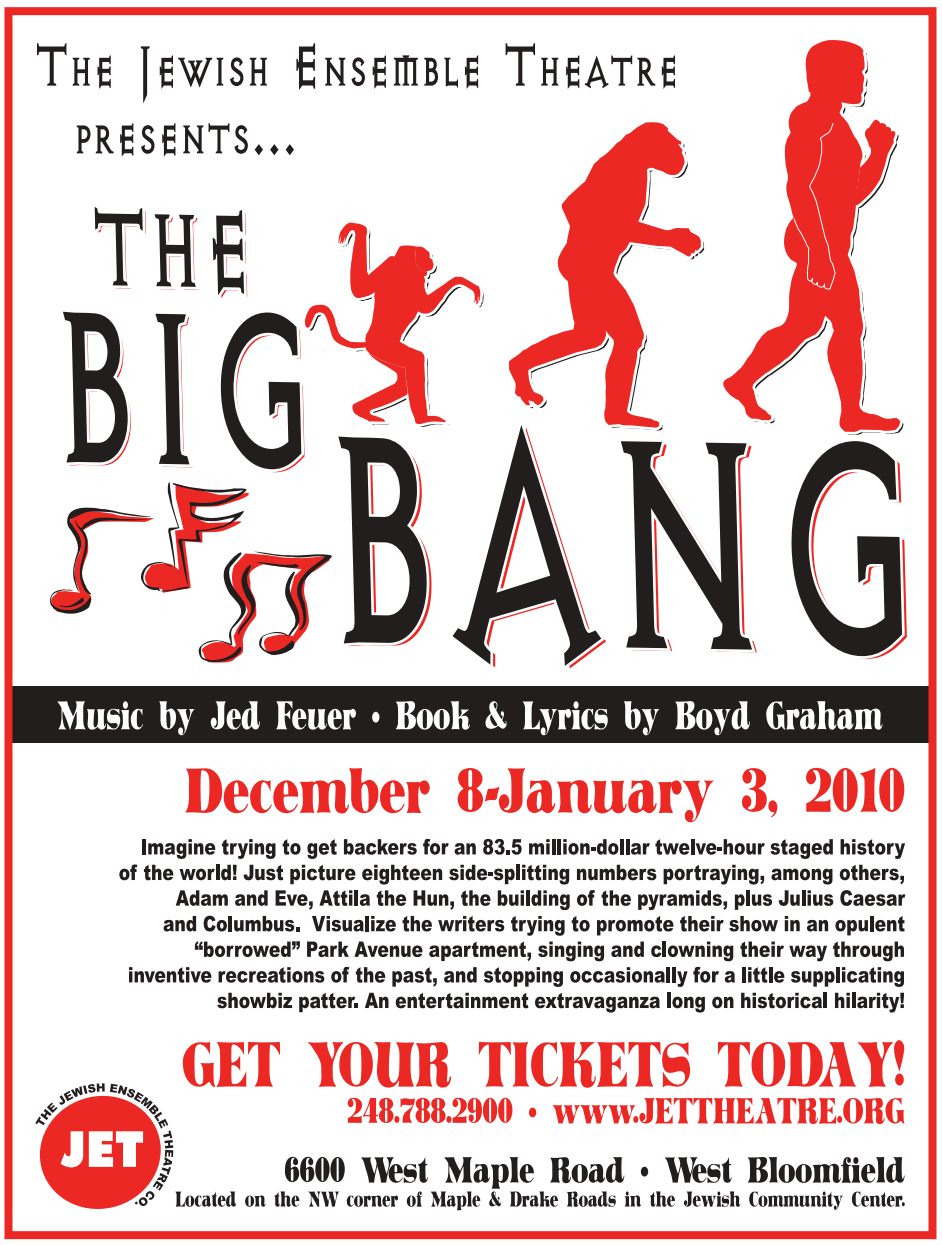
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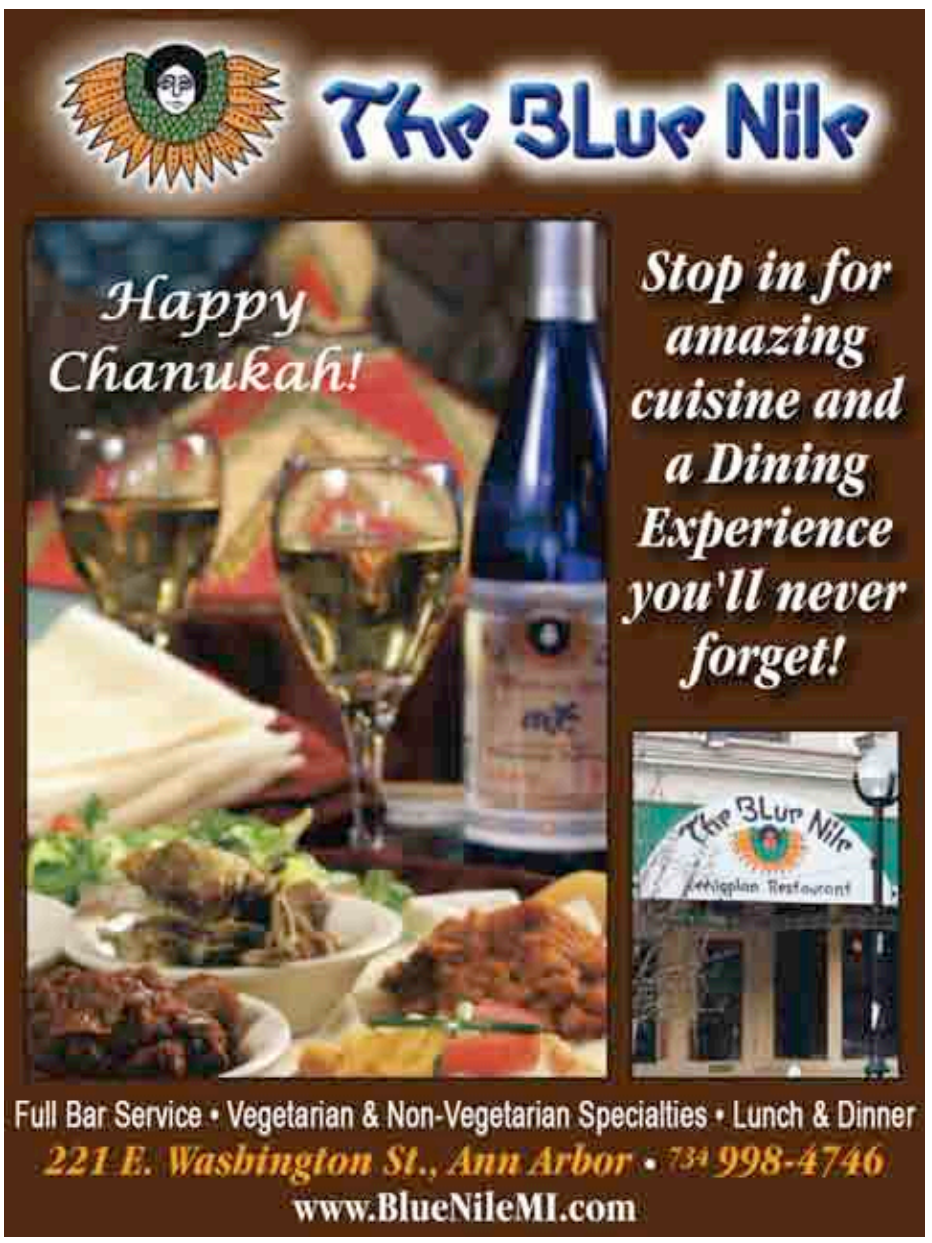
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Calendar

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Discussion and Music: JCC Seniors. Jewish Family Services Geriatric Social Worker Allison Pollock, MSW, will be available for discussion, questions and assistance at 12:30 p.m. At 1 p.m., Arie Lipsky, Musical Director of the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra, returns to the JCC for music and discussion.

Mourning and Mitzvah: TBE. Third session of series with Cantor Annie Rose. 7:30 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 22

Lunch and Learn: TBE. With Rabbi Levy. Discussion of "Issues of Israel over Time and Space," examining Israel as a hope, dream, fantasy, power, home and destination through the lens of Israel as an eternal idea and also a modern nation state. Noon.

Meditation: TBE. 1 p.m.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Followed by songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Kabbalat Services: BIC. Followed by a presentation by Ann Arbor Mayor John Hieftje. 7:30 p.m.

Shabbat Learner's Service: TBE. Honoring new members. Rabbi Levy explains the choreography and meaning of Shabbat prayers. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Saturday 23

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Morning Minyan at 9:30 a.m.

Tot Shabbat: BIC. For preschoolers and their families. 11:15 a.m.

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Sunday 24

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Season of Mussar II: BIC. 9:45 a.m.

Library Book Club: BIC. 10 a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Award Reception: JFS. "Delightful, Delicious, DeLaxes." Jewish Family Services presents the Claire and Isadore Bernstein Leadership Award to Judie and Jerry Lax. Reception at 3 p.m. at Washtenaw Community College. $50/person. For information, phone Robin Little at 769-0209.

Basic Judaism: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Monday 25

English as a Second Language Daily Classes: JFS. Ongoing class from 9 a.m.–noon on Mondays–Fridays and 1–3 p.m. on Mondays–Thursdays at Jewish Family Services, 2245 South State Street. For more information, contact JFS at 769-0209 or email andre@jfsannarbor.org. *Ongoing.*

Adult Learning: TBE. "Bible, Morality, and the 21st Century," with Dr. Cobi Sacerdoti. Second of three-part course providing intellectual look and emotional journey into the moral wisdom of the Bible, where arrogance, pride, jealousyh, love and devotion impact human life. *Also February 8.*

Tuesday 26

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 11 a.m.; $4/session or $10/3 sessions; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Games and activities including mahjong, quilting, art projects and card games, and weekly Bridge Club, 1 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Men's Torah Study: TBE. 7:30 p.m.

"Walking With God Part II–Medieval Texts Through Modernity:" BIC. Presented by Rabbi Kim Blumenthal. 8 p.m.

Weekly Torah Portion—for Women: Chabad. Reading the Bible may be easy, but understanding it is no simple matter. Study the text in the original, together with the classical commentaries. 8:30 p.m. *Every Tuesday.*

Wednesday 27

Judaism 101: BIC. Prayer. 8 p.m.

Thursday 28

Prayer, Weekly Torah Reading and Jewish Philosophy–for Women: Chabad. 9 a.m. at the JCC.

SPICE of LIFE: JCC Seniors. Energy Exercise with Maria Farquhar, 10 a.m., $4 or 3/$10; Current Events with Heather Dombey, a Jewish perspective on this week's news, 11 a.m.; $3 Homemade Dairy Buffet Lunch, noon; Special events and guest presentations, 1 p.m.; Literary Group with Sidney Warschausky at 2:15 p.m. Call Merrill Poliner at 971-0990 for name of current book.

Presentation: Frankel Institute. Michael Kravel-Tovi of Hebrew University presents, "Rite of Passing: (Ex)change of Identities Between the State and the Subject in Contemporary Orthodox Conversion in Israel." Room 2022, 202 South Thayer Street. Noon.

Discussion: JCC Seniors. UM doctoral student Tam Perry will facilitate a presentation and discussion on the various ways that the process of moving may affect seniors. 1 p.m.

Mourning and Mitzvah: TBE. Fourth session of series with Cantor Annie Rose. 7:30 p.m.

Talmud Study Group–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. Sharpen your wits and knowledge of the Jewish legal system by following the intriguing discussions in the Talmud. The Talmud is a composite of practical law, logical argumentation and moral teachings. Study of the original Talmud tractate Taanit chapter 2. 8 p.m. *Every Thursday.*

Friday 29

Lunch and Learn: TBE. With Rabbi Levy. Discussion of "Issues of Israel over Time and Space," examining Israel as a hope, dream, fantasy, power, home and destination through the lens of Israel as an eternal idea and also a modern nation state. Noon.

Weekly Yiddish Reading Group: JCC Seniors. Meets at the JCC. 1:30 p.m. Call Ray Juni at 761-2765 for information.

Tot Shabbat and Dinner: TBE. Followed by songs and popsicles. 5:30–7 p.m.

Sisterhood Shabbat Service: TBE Sisterhood. 7:30 p.m.

Friday evening services: *See listing at the end of the calendar.*

Saturday 30

Torah Study: TBE. Led by Rabbi Levy at 8:50 a.m., followed by Morning Minyan at 9:30 a.m

Mystical Insights to the Torah–for Women: Chabad. Learn more about the mystical dimensions of the Torah: Chabad. 1 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Tu B'Shevat Kids' Night Out: JCC Youth. Featuring games, crafts, dinner and a movie. This year's theme is celebrating trees and taking care of the environment. Partticipants will make crafts with recycled materials, plant seeds, and watch *Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest.* Kids' Night Out events are open to JCC members and non-members in grades K-5. $20/members ($18/siblings); $25/non-members ($23/siblings). Register by January 28. For information, contact Deborah Huerta at deborahhuerta@jccfed.org or phone 971-0990.

Laws of Shabbat–Jewish Ethics: Chabad. Study group code of law for Shabbat, and study of Jewish Ethics, 1/2 hour before sundown. *Every Saturday.*

Shabbat services: *See listing at end of calendar.*

Sunday 31

Reading Hebrew through the Prayer Book–for Women: Chabad. An in-depth study into the prayer book, an overview of the weekly Torah reading, with Jewish philosophy. 9:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidism and open your eyes to the beauty of Judaism. 10:30 a.m. at Chabad House. *Every Sunday.*

Basic Judaism: TBE. With Rabbi Lisa Delson. 7:45 p.m.

Tu B'Shevat Seder: Chabad. Featuring full Seder dinner of the special foods and drinks of Israel, a study session on the meaning of the day, and the Jewish perspective on ecology. 8 p.m.

Jewish Concepts–for Women: Chabad. Learning the deeper meanings to the Jewish way of life. 8 p.m. *Every Sunday.*

Weekly Friday night Shabbat services

Shabbat Service: AAOM. Services held at UM Hillel. 4:45 p.m. Call 994-9258 in advance to confirm time.

Shabbat Service: BIC. 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service: TBE. Tot Shabbat at 5:30 p.m. followed by Shira at 6 p.m.; Shira: Traditional Service at 7:30 p.m. For information, call 665-4744.

Shabbat Service: Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah. 6:15 PM at the JCC the last Friday each month. Musical Shabbat service followed by vegetarian potluck. Tot Shabbat with optional kid's pizza dinner at 6:00 PM. All are welcome to attend. For information, call 913-9705, email info@aarecon.org or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Service: Chabad. Begins at candlelighting time. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals and Jewish holidays. Call 995-3276 in advance.

Weekly Shabbat services

Shabbat Services: AAOM. Morning service, 9:30 a.m. Evening service, 35 minutes before sunset. Call 662-5805 for information. Mincha/Ma'ariv with Seudah Shlisheet and Dvar Torah every week. Torah topics and a bite to eat. Discussions led by Rabbi Rod Glogower and other local scholars. Home hospitality available for Shabbat meals. UM Hillel.

Shabbat Services: BIC. 9:30 a.m.; 6 p.m. Mincha. Morning childcare from 10 a.m.–12:15 p.m.

Shabbat Services: AA Reconstructionist Havurah. Discussion-based format with topics changing monthly. For info, email info@aarecon.org or call 913-9705 or visit www.aarecon.org.

Shabbat Services: Chabad. Morning services at 9:45 a.m. Afternoon services 45 minutes before sundown.

Shabbat Services: Pardes Hannah. Generally meets the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month. Call 663-4039 for more information. 10 a.m. Led by Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg.

Shabbat Services: TBE. Torah Study at 8:50 a.m. Chapel Service at 9:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service at 10 a.m. Call the office at 665-4744 or consult website at www.templebethemeth.org for service details.

Home Hospitality for Shabbat and Holiday Meals: AAOM. Call 662-5805 in advance.

Home Hospitality and Meals: Chabad. Every Shabbat and *yom tov* (Jewish holiday). Call 995-3276 in advance.

Phone numbers and addresses frequently listed in the calendar:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM)
1429 Hill Street 994-5822

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Havurah (AARH)
P.O. Box 7451, Ann Arbor 913-9705

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC)
2000 Washtenaw Ave. 665-9897

Chabad House
715 Hill Street 995-3276

EMU Hillel
965 Washtenaw Ave., Ypsilanti 482-0456

Jewish Community Center (JCC)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 971-0990

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS)
2935 Birch Hollow Drive 975-9872

Jewish Family Services (JFS)
2245 South State Street 769-0209

Jewish Federation
2939 Birch Hollow Drive 677-0100

Pardes Hannah
2010 Washtenaw Ave. 761-5324

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE)
2309 Packard Road 665-4744

UM Hillel
1429 Hill Street 769-0500

Shabbat Candlelighting

December 4	4:45 p.m.
December 11	4:45 p.m.
December 18	4:46 p.m.
December 25	4:50 p.m.
January 1	4:55 p.m.
January 8	5:02 p.m.
January 15	5:09 p.m.
January 22	5:18 p.m.
January 29	5:27 p.m.

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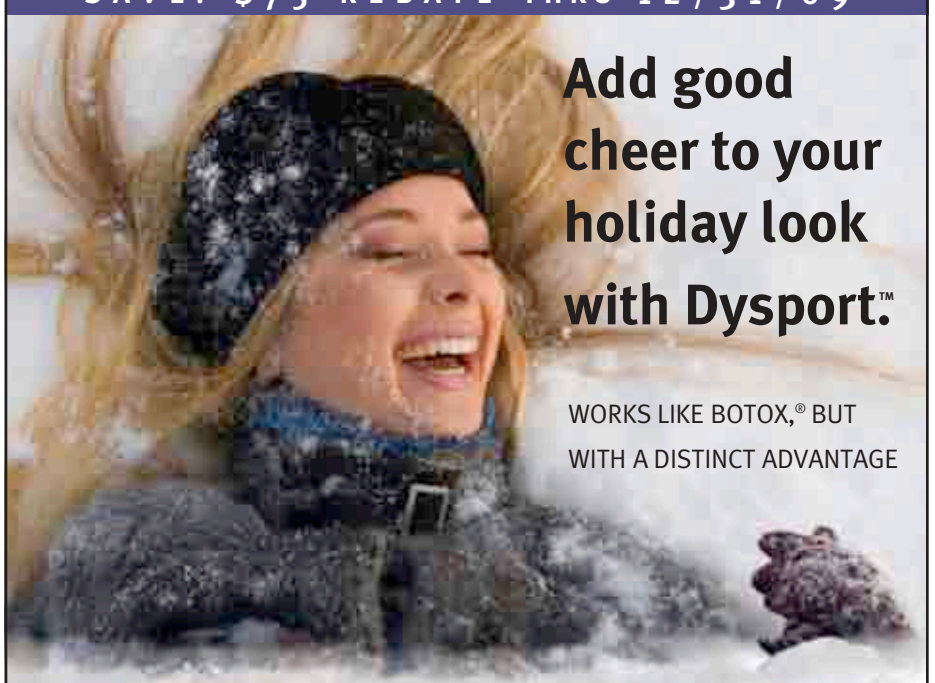
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Going out in the cold

David Erik Nelson, staff writer

Despite intermittently frightful weather, there are many great opportunities to bundle up, brave the storm, and enjoy an evening of theater, comedy, or music. In West Bloomfield, the **Jewish Ensemble Theatre** (6600 West Maple Rd., (248) 788-2900, www.jettheatre.org) will have two new shows opening in December and January. *The Big Bang* is a "spirited and downright goofy" (Douglas J. Keating, *Philadelphia Inquirer*) 80-minute musical overview of human history, and will run from December 8–January 3 (with two New Year's Eve performances). At the end of January the JET will open it's production of Charles Busch's *The Tale of the Allergist's Wife*, a multiple Tony Award-nominated comedy following the Manhattanite's midlife crisis.

Closer to home, the **Ann Arbor Civic Theater** (971-0605, www.a2ct.org) offers *Nine*, Arthur Kopit and Mario Fratti's musical adaptation of filmmaker Federico Fellini's quasi-autobiographical 1963 film *8 1/2*, from January 14–17.

Meanwhile, alongside their ever-excellent selection of new and classic films (including the January 28 Sundance Film Festival USA, a one-night nationwide extension of the Sundance Film Festival), the **Michigan Theater** (608 E. Liberty, 668-TIME, michtheater.org) will have several new live performances. The first, part of their Not Just For Kids series, will be *Tales of the Fourth Grade Nothing*, adapted from the classic Judy Blume coming-of-age story of the same title (Sunday, December 6, at 1:30 p.m.). In January the Michigan will host the popular four-woman comedy *Menopause The Musical* (Tuesday, January 26 and Wednesday, January 27 at 8 p.m.)

MSU's Wharton Center (517) 353-1982, www.whartoncenter.com/) will bring two notable stand-up acts in December. On Sunday, December 13, Jeff Foxworthy (who, incidentally, has authored 11 best-sellers and been nominated for three Grammies) will perform the MSU Auditorium at 7 p.m. Four days later, Jerry Seinfeld will grace the Cobb Great Hall (Thursday, December 17 at 7 p.m.). Little-seen on screen since the final episode of Seinfeld, the actor and comedian has spent the last several years back on stage; as he told Jess Cagle of *Time* magazine: "To actually do your creative thing right in front of an audience and have them judge it right there—that's exciting."

January and December likewise offer music for any palate. At the end of January, the **Tecumseh Center for the Arts** (400 N. Maumee, Tecumseh,; 517.423.6617; www.thetca.org) will host an evening with the Monkees' dreamy front-man Davy Jones (Saturday, January 30, 7:30 p.m.) Invariably numbered among the top-ten teen idols of all time, Jones and his seven-piece band continue to impress audiences. The TCA has made special arrangements to have the Monkeemobile on hand for the event, and rumor has it that ever-affable Jones will be available to chat and sign autographs after the show.

The Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra (994-4801, www.a2so.com), under the baton of Arie Lipsky, will perform two shows celebrating Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's birthday (January 27, 1756). On Saturday, January 23, at 8 p.m., the *Mozart Birthday Bash* at Hill Auditorium will include Mozart's incomparable "Requiem," as well as "Divertimento K136" and the demanding "Horn Concerto No.3." The following day (Sunday, January 24, 4 p.m.) the A2SO will perform the *Mozart World Tour: Ann Arbor* at the Michigan Theater as part of their Family Series. Tickets for either performance start as low as $6.

Finally, in January and December the **University Musical Society** will offer several notable performances. On Saturday, December 12, at 8 p.m., UMS will host pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet at Hill Auditorium. Renowned for his "extraordinary technical facility," the *New York Times* has called Thibaudet "an exquisite interpreter of music by Debussy, Ravel, [and] Satie." Thibaudet's Saturday program will include two pieces by Ravel ("Pavane pour une enfante defunte" and "Miroirs") and Brahms's "Sonata No. 3 in f minor, Op. 5." (the same program Thibaudet will perform three days later at Carnegie Hall). At the end of January the Chicago Symphony Orchestra returns to Hill Auditorium for its 201st Ann Arbor performance with the music of Bartók's one-act opera, *Bluebeard's Castle* (on Wednesday, January 27, at 8 p.m.).

In contemporary world music, UMS has two excellent shows scheduled for January: On Friday, January 8, at 8 p.m., singer/songwriter Souad Massi will perform at the Michigan Theater. A native of Algeria, Massi first distinguished herself with the Algerian polirock band Atakor. The band's inflammatory popularity lead to death threats, and Massi fled to Paris, where she developed a personal, acoustic style influenced by American country, roots, and rock traditions, as well as Portugese fado, and traditional Middle Eastern melodies and instruments. Her songs often weave Algerian Arabic, French, English, and Berber lyrics over a single melody. At the end of the month, on Sunday, January 31, at 4 p.m., Ladysmith Black Mambazo will make their UMS debut at Hill Auditorium. The group—first popularized by their supporting vocals on Paul Simon's Grammy award-winning 1986 album Graceland—continues to powerfully blend traditional South African rhythms, American gospel, and isicathamiya, the folk a cappella music of South African mine workers.

UMS shows aren't limited to the purely musical. In late January UMS will offer a new production by the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company (at the Power Center on Friday, January 22, Saturday, January 23, 8 p.m.; youth performance on January 22, 4 p.m.) Jones's new production, *Fondly Do We Hope… Fervently Do We Pray*, explores the life and evolving impact of Abraham Lincoln, as well as speculating on what might have followed had Lincoln survived to complete post-Civil War Reconstruction.

To make your evening out complete, stop by the **Blue Nile** (221 E Washington St., 998-4746) for family-style Ethiopian cuisine before or after your show. All weekend diners with a University Musical Society or Performance Network ticket in hand receive a 20 percent discount (not including alcohol). ■

Vitals

Mazel Tov

Emilie Weisberg on her bat mitzvah, December 6.
Scott Lieberman on his bar mitzvah, December 6.
Benjamin Shapiro on his bar mitzvah, December 6.
Tuval Vaknin on his bar mitzvah, December 20.
David Hankin in his bar mitzvah, January 31.
Mark and Sharon Weiner on the birth of their twins, Shayna and Aaron Moses, on September 22.
Chuck and Sharon Newman's son and Dorothy Newman's grandson, Michael Newman, on his marriage to Patricia Cavuoto, on November 7.
Jason and Rachel Robinson on the birth of their son, Benjamin Jacob Robinson, also grandson of Carol and Joseph Brown.
Gilla and Ami Wiesel on the birth of their daughter Ayelet.

Condolences

Jodi Wallo on the death of her great uncle, David Vanek, October 10.
Lolita Fisher on the death of her husband, Robert, October 14.
Lisa Ensfield on the death of her aunt, Hinda Burchman, October 23.
Steven Russman and sons Daniel and David, on the death of their wife and mother, Rochelle Kostant, November 8.
Arthur Riba on the death of his brother, Leonard Riba.

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increasing [in use] have to do with religious life." Thus, the phenomenon one survey respondent reported: "When I was growing up, I called it temple. When my children went to day school, I called it synagogue. I now call it shul. I am not sure why."

Though Jews across the religious spectrum said they would be likely to consider Hebrew names for their children, baby names are "an important resource for Jews to indicate intra-Jewish differences." Less observant Jews, they found, are most likely to prefer anglicized biblical names such as Jacob, Ethan, Hannah or Abigail. Modern Orthodox Jews were most likely to choose modern Hebrew names such as Ezra, Ari, Talia or Eliana, often substituting them for the equivalent Yiddish names of deceased relatives (so, for example, they might name a daughter Tova, meaning "good" in Hebrew, after a grandmother named Gittel).

For the most part, only fervently Orthodox Jews said they would consider giving a child a Yiddish name like Moyshe, Mendy or Basya. In one of the survey's least surprising findings, only two percent of Jews said they'd consider naming their baby Christopher.

(Reprinted from Tabletmag.com, a new read on Jewish life.) ■

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